THE EXPOSITORY TIMES

Notes of Recent Exposition

THE study of the Canon of the New Testament is notoriously one of the dullest parts of New Testament study. There are few teachers, and still fewer students, who do not come to the end of a course upon the Canon without a sigh of relief. Dr. Floyd V. FILSON has achieved the apparently impossible by writing an absorbing study of the Canon in *Which Books Belong in the Bible?* [1] This is not an examination handbook; it is not a book of lists and dates; it is something far better than that—it is a study of principles.

The Canon of the New Testament consists of 'the books approved for regular use in the public worship and teaching of the Church.' It therefore contains 'the writings given to the Church by the working of God. It presents His word, His gospel, His claim and His promise.' Now it is clear that there cannot be any such thing as a Canon of Scripture without a certain view of what the Bible is and contains. Dr. FILSON provides us with a most penetrating analysis of views of the Bible in a series of contrasting opposites.

Our attitude to the Bible may be one of *Indifference* or *Overzealous Biblicism.* To some the Bible brings no more of God than they can find in Nature or in a modern poem. It is not unique; it is simply one of the places to which men go for help. That view is inadequate for the Bible deals both with God's 'central action' and with 'the basic situation of man before God.' On the other hand, Biblicism forgets that it is God, not the Bible, who is the central fact for the Christian. Even the Bible cannot speak without the Spirit. 'Our hope is in God; our life is in Christ; our power is in the Spirit.' The Christian cannot deify the Scripture. Our attitude may be one of *Legalism* or of *Contempt for the Written Word.* Legalism regards the Bible 'as a rule-book.' Contempt for the written word speaks largely of the work of the Spirit. But in fact the Spirit interprets, continues, and advances that very revelation which was given in Christ and which is contained in the Bible. Our attitude to the Bible may be to regard it as an *Outgrown Product* or as *Timeless Truth.* The Bible is ancient and it is argued that what is ancient is necessarily 'primitive, incomplete and imperfect.' But the Bible does not deal with that which is transient. It in fact tells the story of 'God's action to realize His purpose and to redeem His people through Christ.' On the other hand, there are those who are prepared to defend at all costs the Bible's science, history, social practices, and to say that there is nothing antiquated in it. But in many cases—and it could not be otherwise—the Bible 'lives in the time to which it speaks,' and 'reflects the transient situation in which parts of it were written.' The Bible deals with something which is beyond history, and yet itself is within history. There are those who regard the Bible as *Divine Dictation* and those who regard it as *Human Product.* The Council of Trent stated in 1546 that the Bible was written 'with the Holy Spirit dictating.' The actual penman is thus rendered entirely passive. But this is not God's way of doing things. God uses a man as he is, with all his own characteristics and abilities. On the other hand there are those who assign the Bible entirely to the seeking mind of man, and forget the place of the revelation of God. There are those who assign the Canon to *Individual Judgment,* and those who assign it to *Church Decision.* The one argues that each individual Christian must settle his own Canon, but, apart from anything else, 'such splendid isolation denies the basically social nature of life in Christ.' On the other hand to make the decision of the Church solely operative is in fact to say that the Church is supreme over Scripture—which indeed is the Roman Catholic position.

In this, as indeed in so many other things, orthodoxy is the walk along the narrow ridge with the abyss of heresy on either side.

Dr. FILSON goes on to argue persuasively, and indeed unanswerably, that the Old Testament must always be part of the Christian Bible. He argues with equal force that the Apocrypha can never be part of the Canon. He goes on to establish the necessity of apostolic witness, which was

[1] Westminster Press, Philadelphia; $3.00.

the original test of books admitted to the Canon, and which was basically correct.

In a final and most significant chapter he discusses the question *Is Tradition Subject to Scripture?* Tradition always implies a group, and it is the handing down of essential information and essential heritage. It has its dangers; it can issue in a conservatism which itself can issue in formalism, legalism and archaism. But tradition is a living thing. 'To live is to adjust,' and tradition develops and continues and adjusts itself to a new situation. The Church has its tradition, a tradition which Jesus created, which oral witness began to hand down, which became a written witness. This witness was an apostolic witness to which all later tradition is subject.

There are four possible views of tradition. (1) *Scripture must give way to Living Tradition.* This view holds that Scripture is a legitimate 'first stage of spiritual development. But the Church should gradually become emancipated from such an imperfect expression of the Christian faith.' This loses sight of the basic Christian affirmation that Christianity centres 'in an ancient historical event and its apostolic interpretation.'

(2) *Selected earlier Tradition as Normative as Scripture.* This may take the form of regarding the first three Christian centuries, the events of the Reformation, or the creeds and practices of one's own communion as normative and binding. This forgets 'the centrality and finality of God's action in Christ,' and 'the central revelation of the apostolic witness.' It erects other ages into ages of as great revelation as the age of the Divine central event.

(3) *Tradition as Authoritative as Scripture.* This is the Roman Catholic position. 'The Church is made absolute.' The Church itself is not under the judgment of Scripture, but actually becomes the judge of Scripture. Holtzmann called it a theory of 'continuous inspiration,' and it can obviously be used to impose practices and doctrines which have no foundation whatever in Scripture. Such an outlook on tradition does nothing less than call in question the apostolic witness to the central event, a witness which alone is dependable.

(4) *The Protestant View of Tradition.* The Protestant gratefully uses the tradition which he receives from home and Church. But the Protestant cannot agree to Church-controlled tradition, nor can he agree that any later tradition can take an equal rank with Scripture. He gratefully and humbly uses tradition but continually asks 'whether this or that aspect of it squares with the Bible as the Holy Spirit enables the Church to understand it.' 'The final control belongs to God. It is exercised by the living Christ. It is made effective in Christians by the Holy Spirit, whom Christ sent and still sends to His Church. It is centred, so far as human witness and word are concerned, in the written form of the apostolic gospel.' 'God speaks His basic message to the Church through the Canon of Holy Scripture by the inner witness of the Holy Spirit.'

This is one of the most notable books on the Canon which we have ever read. It compels thought and reaches conclusions—a rare combination.

The modern Ecumenical Movement is approaching its fiftieth year, if the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910 is to be reckoned as its beginning. In that period the ideal of a united Church has won the allegiance of increasing numbers of Christians. There is a more genuine sense of Christian brotherliness across denominational frontiers. Habits, machinery and techniques of co-operation in thought and service have been built up. A better understanding of each other's convictions and traditions has been realized. All these things are clear gain; but the last mentioned has not only dispelled prejudice; it has clarified and illuminated the differences of conviction and tradition which are the substantial grounds for the divisions of Christendom to-day. Thus, though the distance between the branches of the divided Church has been lessened, a disunity based on conviction remains almost as formidable as ever. May it not be that the time has come for all who are seriously committed to the ideal of a united Church to ask themselves what exactly they mean by a united Church? An eminent Professor-Emeritus of Church History in the University of Chicago, who has been active in the work of the World Council of Churches, has written a book, which deserves the fullest consideration, to invite a re-examination of this matter in the light of Scripture, history and the present situation.[1]

Dr. Garrison points out how central the concept of the oneness of the Church has been throughout most of the Christian centuries, but he asserts that only one or the other of two things can ever make possible a united Church. Either agreement must be reached upon the points which are now at issue among the denominations or differences of convic-

[1] Professor-Emeritus Winfred Ernest Garrison, B.D., Ph.D., *The Quest and Character of a United Church* (Abingdon Press; $3.50).

tion and practice will remain, but must be so conceived that they will no longer constitute barriers to unity. The greater part of his closely reasoned book is a comprehensive historical survey tending to show that the first of these has been tried more continuously and has failed more disastrously than anything else the Church has tried to do. The unity that has been sought throughout most of Church History after the earliest period has been a unity requiring conformity to a standardized body of theology, uniformity in modes of worship, and the acceptance of a specific type of organization, generally with centralized authority. The scope of the unity sought has been sometimes the whole Church throughout the known world, sometimes the Church within a single nation or other unit of civil government, and sometimes simply the denomination. The methods of reaching this unity, conceived in terms of substantial uniformity, have varied according to the scope of the Church concerned and according to its relation with the civil power—burning, banishing or silencing dissenters, if that were possible, excommunicating them and declaring them no part of the true Church, when it did not have the power or had become too civilized to persecute, and, of course, using all the arts of argument. Since these methods, whether on the larger or the smaller scale, have failed, there would seem to be need for re-examining a concept of unity which the Church has never been able to realize by persuasion ; which broke down when it was partially realized in the Middle Ages by methods of coercion such as modern man will not endure and Christian men ought never to have countenanced ; and which, when carried over into an age which rejected violence as a means of suppressing religious diversity, has resulted in the proliferation of sects.

Dr. GARRISON believes that a large proportion of the present leaders of the Protestant churches who are active in the Ecumenical Movement hold that an approximate uniformity of doctrine, policy and worship is essential to full unity, and they cherish the hope that it can be attained by theological study and conference. For himself, he sees no road that way. His quest is for such unity as is compatible with freedom. He stands for liberty in the Church, that is, for a kind of unity which could include communions having the widest variety of doctrines, polities and forms of worship and individuals holding a wide range of theological opinions. In the light of history it would be folly for the ecumenical impulses of our time to dissipate their energies in a fruitless endeavour to promote unity by adopting those institutional manifestations of unity which have never been anything but divisive. It is an essential of the union of Christians in one Church that no one be required to accept something that he does not believe in order to satisfy the demands of some influential party which may insist that its particular doctrine or polity is of the essence of the Church and must be accepted by all.

What, then, are the implications of a unity such as is compatible with freedom ? What will the united Church be like if it has within its membership Christians of all the various denominational traditions and all shades of theological opinion, if it does not practice a uniform mode of worship in all its congregations, and if it does not have a comprehensive and integrated system of polity to give it visible institutional unity ? There is only one indispensable element—that the members must love one another and feel that sense of brotherhood and mutual concern for one another's spiritual and temporal welfare without which no church—local, denominational or universal—can be truly the Church. Other elements would be an interchangeable membership and ministry. Congregations would have the right to have ministers adapted to their needs and views, and such adaptation would include episcopal ordination if the congregation's convictions demanded it. Since the unity of the Church would not be one of ecclesiastical government, different polities would co-exist, each with its own constituency of congregations. Some parts of the united Church might continue their relationship with governments, if they could do this without pretensions to superior churchliness. There would be no doctrinal test other than the primitive test of loyalty embodied in the declaration ' Jesus is Lord.' There must be similar liberty and variety in the use and interpretation of sacraments. Inter-communion should be possible even among those whose interpretations are different. Further, there must be agencies of co-operation for the missionary, benevolent and educational tasks of the Church. It must have machinery in order to do its work. The Church should be united : the machinery need not be, for the unity of the Church does not consist of the unity of its machinery. It consists of the members loving one another and thinking of one another as members of the one Church and having a sense of fellowship in sharing a common responsibility for carrying on in the world the work that Christ committed to His Church.

If it be asked what is to be done about those communions which hold as essential some points that other Christians do not rate so highly, and insist that these points must be accepted as a condition of union, the answer is that nothing can be done except to leave the door open for them to come into the united Church, bringing their specific

views and practices with them if they will, but not unchurching those who do not accept them.

Finally, Dr. GARRISON concludes thus—'Liberty is essential in a united Church, but liberty is not in itself a bond of unity. A common loyalty, mutual love, and the recognition of shared responsibility are both the bonds and the evidences of unity. These are stronger bonds of unity than the uniformities and conformities upon which the churches have hitherto relied too much, and by resistance to which the Church has been divided. These qualities of love and service can be strong enough to bind the Church together and give substance to the saying that we are "one in Christ." They can be so clearly visible against the contrasting background of a selfishly competitive society that both the quality of Christianity and the unity of the Church will be made manifest, "that the world may believe."'

Luther as Exegete—(*Continued*)

BY PROFESSOR KURT ALAND, D.D., HALLE-WITTENBERG

'THAT which treats of Christ'—that is Luther's standard for judging the Bible.

What is the result for the Old Testament of this point of view?

'Some people hold the Old Testament in little esteem,' Luther says, 'because it was given to the Jewish people alone and has no further validity since it speaks only of the past. They think they have enough in the New Testament and allege that they search the Old Testament for purely spiritual meanings' (*Luther Deutsch* v. 9).[1]

For Luther that is a false standpoint. Not only Christ Himself (Jn 5^{9}), Paul (2 Ti $2^{15ff.}$, Ro 1^{2}, 1 Co 15^{3-4}) and Peter continually refer us back to the Old Testament. The Old and New Testaments are allied.

He who reads the Old Testament, then, must not take offence 'at the simple language and naïve stories which he will often meet,' but he is not to doubt that

'however simple they may look they are all words, works, judgments and stories of the great majesty and might and wisdom of God. . . . Here you will find the swaddling-clothes and the manger in which Christ lies, to which the angel sends the shepherds. Humble and plain are the swaddling-clothes, but precious is the treasure, Christ, that lies therein' (*Luther Deutsch*, v. 10).

That is one fact. But it must also be observed—just as the New Testament is an 'evangel or book of grace,' the Old Testament is a book of law, and in fact a book of law of a limited kind, limited in its content and in the duration of its applicability. Moses himself, according to Luther, makes known the latter limitation when he says (Dt 18^{15}) 'that his work and his teaching shall last till the time of Christ and then shall cease' (*Luther Deutsch*, v. 21). The limitation of content becomes evident by the fact that 'Moses throws the laws together in such disorder' (*Luther Deutsch*, v. 15), that he keeps saying and commanding the same thing (*Luther Deutsch*, v. 15), that everything is so circumscribed by law that there is room for nothing else (*Luther Deutsch*, v. 13). This is because Moses had to deal with the Jewish people, the People of the Law. For—and this is definitive for the Pentateuch as well as for all the Old Testament—according to Luther it was 'Moses' real intention to expose sin by means of the Law and so confound all human presumption . . . Moses can do through the Law no more than show what is to be done and what avoided. Strength and power to do or not to do he cannot give and so he leaves us prostrate in sin' (*Luther Deutsch*, v. 16). That is the limitation of the Old Testament and at the same time its significance. For human reason is so blind that it cannot perceive sin. If a man leads an outwardly respectable life he thinks he has done enough and all is well with him. 'To banish this blindness and concealed presumption Moses was needed.' And all the other books of the Old Testament are to be regarded in the same light as the Pentateuch. The prophetic and historical books are not different from the Pentateuch. Like it their concern is to show 'that through the right understanding of the Law the people are kept in mind of their insufficiency and pointed on to Christ.'

However—much as we appreciate what the Law means to mankind—since the gospel came into the world through Christ it must not be forgotten that the 'second voice from Heaven,' as Luther says, has for Christians annulled the first. 'The first public sermon from Heaven' is that from Sinai to Moses and the Jewish people, that is, the Law of

[1] *Luther Deutsch*: Herausgeber, D. Kurt Aland [Halle/Berlin].

the Old Testament, the second is what happened at Pentecost, that is, the gospel or the New Testament. Since for Christians the Law came to an end with Christ, one must not now behave as if the letter of the Law bound Christians. He who wants to apply to Christians the directions of the Old Testament without testing them is taking the wrong road. The rule for applying the Old Testament to us may thus be summed up :

' One must treat the Scriptures with discrimination. The Word has from the beginning come in many ways. You must not just look to see that it is the Word of God, but, more important, see to whom it is addressed, whether to you or another. It is all the difference between summer and winter. God said many things to David and bade him do this and that, but that does not concern me ; it is not addressed to me. You must regard the Word that concerns *you*, that is addressed to *you*, not what concerns another. . . . In what concerns me I may boldly venture and trust myself to it as to a strong rock. When it does not concern me I am to refrain from action ' (W.A., xxiv. 12).

There are three things in the Old Testament of abiding significance for Christians. For the Christian the external laws are dead, unless he adopt them of his own free will because they seem to him suitable for outward conduct, or because, like the Ten Commandments, they correspond to the law of Nature implanted by God in all our hearts. Moses was not the first man to teach that there is one God only, beside whom man shall have no other gods, nor was he alone in forbidding murder, adultery, theft, and so on, ' but so at the same time does the natural law written in every man's heart ' (W.A., xviii. 80). But since ' the natural laws are nowhere found in such fine and orderly arrangement as in Moses ' (W.A., xxviii. 81), we have taken over the Ten Commandments in the form he gave them. Christ Himself did the same when in Mt 7^{12} He ' summed up all the law and the prophets in this natural law : " All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them : for this is the law and the prophets " ' ; and so again did Paul.

That is the first thing. Now the second thing that the Old Testament gives us is not to be found in Nature (cf. W.A., xviii. 82), namely the promises of Christ's coming and God's pledges with regard to Him—the best things in the Old Testament.

' These the gospel proclaims, and they are not the subject of commands which make demands on us to do or to refrain from doing something ; they are the glad and comforting promises of God, which we accept and boldly rely on through all the assaults of sin, death, the devil and Hell ' (W.A., xxiv. 10).

' Thirdly we read the Pentateuch because of the fine examples of faith, love and suffering in the beloved forefathers Adam, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and so on throughout, through whom we should learn to trust God and to love Him ' (W.A., xxiv. 15).

On the other hand, we also read in the Old Testament of examples of unbelief and of the wrath of God visited on it, of how He does not remit to the godless their unbelief and wickedness, but punishes them. We are not Cain, it is true, but if we behave like Cain we shall receive a like punishment.

So much for the Old Testament. What is it in the New Testament that is important for Luther ? Firstly, we must notice the difference between Law and Gospel, which Luther has already dealt with in the case of the Old Testament :

' Do not turn Christ into a Moses, as if He did no more than give teaching and example, or as if the gospel were just a book of law and doctrine. You should rather conceive of Christ in His own words, in His work and His Passion in two senses : first, as a model held up to you for you to follow and imitate. . . . But that is the least important thing in the gospel, which does not account for its being called the gospel. For thereby Christ is no more use to you than any other holy man . . . in short : this kind of thing does not make a Christian, it only makes hypocrites. You must go much further still. . . .

' The principle and the foundation of the gospel is that, before you have taken Him for your model, you receive Christ and confess Him as the free gift of God to you, now become your own. So that, if you should see or listen to Him doing or suffering, you do not doubt that He, Christ Himself in His acting and suffering is yours, on which you can rely no less than if you had done it yourself, yea, as if you were that same Christ. That is, I tell you, rightly to apprehend the gospel. . . . That is the great fire of God's love for us, through which heart and conscience are rendered joyous, secure and content. That is preaching the Christian faith. Therefore such preaching is called gospel, which is to say, in German, " glad, good, comfortable tidings " ' (W.A., x. 1, 11 ff.).

As 'a dying man puts his property in order so that it may be distributed after his death to the heirs he has named,' so is the New Testament to be regarded. In it Christ left us His will. In the Old Testament this will is repeatedly promised us by the prophets. In the books of the New Testament it is given us, although in various manners, as we have already seen.

Some New Testament Scriptures belong as it were to an ' appendix ' to the main Gospel writings, but even among the remaining books of the New Testament it is not to be denied there is still, according to Luther, a priority of importance.

If he were given a choice—supposing such a thing were possible—to decide between rejecting the accounts of Christ's deeds or His words, then he would rather renounce the account of His deeds.

For, he says, 'the works would not help me, but His words give life.' Therefore Luther puts the Gospel according to John, 'the one nobly true Gospel, and the chief of them all,' at the head of the Gospels, because in it the sayings of Jesus stand in the centre, and therefore, too, he places the Epistles of Paul and Peter above the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke.

That is, it might at first seem, Luther's judgment on the New Testament. But is it really the case that according to Luther, we are bound to observe such a carefully considered scale of values in the New Testament, with a corresponding adjustment in our estimate of the individual books: at the head, the Gospel of John; next, the Epistles of Paul, and among them the Epistles to the Romans, Galatians and Ephesians first (Luther mentions the last two in another place as being next to Romans); then the First Epistle of Peter; and following these, finally, the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke? To conceive of the New Testament in such a way and to split it up into different sections of unequal worth would be fundamentally to misunderstand Luther. That applies particularly to us as theologians, who think historically and are far too prone to distinguish different strata in the New Testament (in the way we judge them we differ, but that we recognize them and can only with difficulty tear ourselves away from them, that is common to us all). Luther in his preface to the New Testament has expressed his opinion about this unequivocally:

'Therefore let it first be known that we must rid ourselves of the delusion that there are four Gospels and only four Gospels . . . on the contrary we must adhere to this: . . . the New Testament is one book, in which are written the gospel and God's promise, as well as the history of those who believed and those who did not. Thus every man may be sure there is only one Gospel, only one book in the New Testament, only one faith, and only one God, who promises (salvation)' (W.A., *Deutsche Bibel*, vi. 2).

There is only one Gospel, though it is related by many apostles. Every Epistle of Paul and Peter is a Gospel as much as the Acts of the Apostles. Certainly they do not contain *all* the words and works of Christ, but then neither do those Scriptures which we commonly designate as 'Gospels.' The real meaning of 'Gospel' as Luther defines it is

'a discourse about Christ, declaring Him to be the Son of God, who was made man for us, died and rose again, and is set as Lord above all' (W.A., x. 1, 9).

What fulfils these requirements is the gospel.

'As there is not more than one Christ so there is not and cannot be more than one Gospel. Since Paul and Peter teach nothing but Christ, in the manner described above, their Epistles can be nothing but Gospel' (W.A., x. 1, 10).

Further, the prophets also, in so far as they speak of Christ and announce His coming, belong to this one Gospel.

'And I say verily,' Luther affirms, 'any one who does not take this view of the gospel will never be enlightened in the Scriptures, nor will he be able to grasp its first principles' (W.A., x. 1, 1, 10).

The New Testament a unity, one Gospel, Old and New Testaments allied in unity—with this we are at the culmination and also the end of what it is possible to say in the context of this lecture on the subject of 'Luther as Exegete.'

Many questions remain to be answered. For example it would be worth while to examine whether Luther's actual Scriptural interpretations correspond to the principles he lays down (the pamphlet against Erasmus, for instance, as well as that against Karlstadt, offers rich material). It would also be worth asking ourselves whether Luther does not himself sometimes even offend against his own exegetical principles (for example, after the year 1525, which marks an important stage in his Biblical exegesis, and even after the second decisive year of 1529, he continued to hold to an allegorical interpretation of certain texts). In the Old Testament above all it would be worth asking whether the Christological exegesis indulged in by Luther, which is so fashionable again to-day, can be wholly retained by us. Can we also, just to take as an example the *Summaries of the Psalms* of 1533, approach the Psalter with Luther's scheme of interpretation: psalms of prophecy, doctrinal psalms, psalms of consolation, prayer psalms, psalms of thanksgiving (W.A., xxxviii. 17 f.), and consider each psalm from the viewpoint of which of the Ten Commandments and which petition of the Lord's Prayer it falls under? (W.A., xxxviii. 27). Here and in the New Testament we shall perhaps often require to oppose Luther's exegetical practice by the exegetical principles which he himself enunciates. But we cannot discuss that now. Our problem here was the attempt to determine, by taking together a group of writings, Luther's principles for the evangelical interpretation of Scripture. This was a clearly defined problem which had to be answered in the plainest way. As far as possible, Luther has spoken for himself. It is obvious, however, that the wealth that lies in his writings can only be hinted at, even were my translation of Luther's words into English better than it is. Only the study of Luther's writings themselves can take us further, and fortunately an ever wider range is now being published in English.

Loneliness

By the Reverend Canon Theodore O. Wedel, College of Preachers, Washington

A recent study of our contemporary social scene—its very title, *The Quest for Community*, summarizing its major theme—suggests that in every age certain key words are clues to the era's characteristic channel of faith and thought. In the nineteenth century such words as *individual*, *change*, *progress*, *reason*, and *freedom* were notable 'for their wide use as linguistic tools' and 'for their symbolic value in the convictions of immense numbers of men.' To-day, by way of sharp contrast, the new symbols describing the concern of our social diagnosticians are such words as *disintegration*, *disorganization*, *decline*, *breakdown*, *instability*.[1] The author might, surely, have added a further word to his roster of clues to the state of man in modern life—*loneliness*. It occurs, as a matter of fact, frequently in his ensuing argument as descriptive of the resultant, in terms of personal experience, of the social *malaise* of our time.

Any reader of the literature of our day who underscores or garners into a commonplace book typical expressions of the mood of our era could furnish for himself a cento of confessions of the loneliness of the 'autonomous' man of the twentieth century. 'It isn't that I *want* to be alone,' cries a character in T. S. Eliot's *Cocktail Party*,

> But that every one's alone—or so it seems to me.
> They make noises, and think they are talking to each other;
> They make faces, and think they understand each other,
> And I'm sure that they don't. Is it a delusion?

Psychiatrists and theologians could join in a chorus of testimonials to assure T. S. Eliot's heroine that her observation is not a delusion. Karen Horney, a trusted American psychiatrist, describes the contemporary neurotic as a person haunted by 'the incapacity to be alone, varying from slight uneasiness and restlessness to a definite terror of solitude. . . . These persons have the feeling of drifting forlornly in the universe, and any human contact is a relief to them.'[2] Tracing modern man from the age of communal structures of faith to our day of social disintegration, a theologian like Paul Tillich can conclude: 'When the remnants of a common world broke down, the individual was thrown into complete loneliness and the despair connected with it.'[3]

Citations from the researches of contemporary social scientists which trace this vanishing of a 'common world,' to use Dr. Tillich's phrase, could fill a volume. The student will meet historical analyses of the rise of the monolithic state, in demonic totalitarian form, but also in the form of the Welfare State emerging on democratic soil. In either of these, when in full flower, society is atomized, the community of the voting booth or of the plebiscite or of the queue before the door of a benevolent bureaucrat replacing the community of clan or village or town meeting or the once socially important parish church. Or, again, the student will see this emergence of autonomous man, the lonely uprooted individual, pictured as inevitable resultant of the Renaissance and even of the Protestant Reformation. Whatever be the value judgment ultimately placed upon this liberation of the individual from once tyrannous restraints, it seems clear that disillusionment is the contemporary mood. We are in the midst of a 'flight from freedom,' in a 'quest for community.' Speaking of man in his modern emancipated state, Reinhold Niebuhr can say: 'It is this autonomous individual who really ushers in modern civilization and who is completely annihilated in the final stages of that civilization.'[4]

A more superficial observer, might, to be sure, attempt a counter-argument. Emancipation of the individual has, he may grant, dissolved most of our inherited social structures. We have 'mass man.' We have egalitarian democracy. We have fought hard for it. And has this not opened the way precisely for community and 'man with man' in ways undreamt of by earlier generations? Look at mass communication, for example (the very word 'mass' redeemed from obloquy). The technological triumphs of the twentieth century do seem to have moved men out of prisons of isolation into intimate contact with one another. We can fly in hours to the antipodes. The telephone and the radio can bring a voice from any distance into our very bed-chamber, with time annihilated. Solitude? No one needs to fear it to-day! Yet, the moment we look beneath the spectacular surface of our mass communication era, a paradox meets the eye. Mass communication—the radio a

[1] Robert A. Nisbet, *The Quest for Community*, 4 and 7.

[2] *The Neurotic Personality of our Time*, 117.

[3] *The Protestant Era*, 245.

[4] *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, i. 59.

chief example—is not communication 'between' man and man at all. It is a tyranny of monologue, the opposite of what Martin Buber lovingly calls 'the sacrament of dialogue.'

The *Time* magazine a few years ago quoted a prominent radio artist's comment on this mass communication paradox. He harked back, in a moment of reflection, to an earlier period of his career when he still harboured the illusion that he was addressing a community of listeners. 'In those days,' he confessed, 'we were all talking to the "ladies and gentlemen" of the radio audience. I decided there wasn't any such audience. There was just one guy or one girl, off somewhere listening by themselves. Hell, if they were together, they'd have something better to do than to listen to the radio.' [1] The monologue of the radio may be an anodyne for the pain of loneliness. It is not a cure.

Another illusion that the loneliness of modern man has been conquered in our time also presents a paradox. No portrayal of the gospel of Karl Marx is even approximately fair which does not recognize its appeal as the good news of escape from the waste-land of empty and meaningless individualism. Converts for the first time belong to something, to a cause. They are actors in a drama with a goal. History has received eschatological depth. Let Christians talk of love of neighbour. The latter is a cold word compared with 'comrade.' Comrades, visible, near at hand, and marching shoulder to shoulder toward the new Canaan, now receive the homage of loyalty and sacrifice once rendered to the distant deity of religion. How can loneliness enter into such a world of brotherhood?

A Roman Catholic writer has vividly described this enthronement of man in place of God as an object of devotion—a deification not limited to totalitarian Communism but shared by the humanist everywhere: 'The love of man for man's sake *must* necessarily be stronger and richer in other camps than ours. Are they not confined within a world from which heaven has been removed like a roof? On the level floor of a plain visible from end to end, objects stand out stark and bare, hopeless captives of the relentless light which has stripped them of every wonder, every blessed dream. And on such an earth, without cover or distance, when longing reaches into the void, these people are packed unendurably tight, treading on each other's feet, too close to escape. These people, who have nothing but themselves, who are without God, how terribly important they must become to one another—important as we who live simultaneously and inseparably with God can never be important to each other!' [2]

Does history record a greater disillusionment of faith in an idol than the unveiling of the abyss yawning beneath the altar erected to this false deity of man as his own saviour? In a world in which men have nothing but themselves, in which they must seek salvation from one another, has evil been banished? And when evil makes its entrance into the new Garden of Eden, must this not be traced back to the 'brother' and 'comrade' also? Human brotherhood, unredeemed, is still that of Cain and Abel, its first emergence in history, as pictured in the stark realism of the Biblical drama of our race, ending in fratricide. Envy and pride still reign in the human heart, breaking every communal bond forged by frail mortals, even that of brethren sacrificing before an altar. A 'comrade' can be transformed in the space of a day or an hour into an 'enemy of the people,' Utopia into a concentration camp.

Has Christianity an answer to the problem of loneliness? A reading between the lines of the passage just quoted from the Roman Catholic analyst of our contemporary social scene suggests that disillusionment awaits our search here also, at least at the outset. Entrance into the life of Christian faith is not first of all a march into a Utopia of fraternity. Before we can really meet our neighbour, we are summoned to a meeting with God, and in that confrontation we stand naked and alone. 'We are fools to depend upon the society of our fellow-men,' says Pascal. 'Wretched as we are, powerless as we are, they will not aid us; we shall die alone. We therefore should act as if we were alone.' [3] Prerequisite to a solution of the problem of loneliness is a rescue from fear of the lonely state itself, solitude no longer a terror. Then, by blessed paradox, we may receive grace to meet our neighbour also.

But shall we see the wonder of that grace unless we realize what a meeting of an 'I' with a 'Thou,' be this 'Thou' God or neighbour, really involves? To cite Pascal again: 'I put it down as a fact that if all men knew what each other said, there would not be four friends in the world.' [4] Envisage a revelation in even a chance encounter with our fellows not only of our words, but of our secret thoughts! The mention of only one of the seven deadly sins—that of envy—and the briefest of self-examinations can make every conscience tremble. We are all masked Cains, awaiting our Day of Judgment. 'Do you not know that there comes a midnight hour,' says Kierkegaard, 'when every

[1] Arthur Godfrey, in *Time*, 27th February 1950, p. 75. Cited by Malcolm Boyd in *Crisis in Communication*, 109.

[2] Ida Friederike Coudenhove, *The Nature of Sanctity*, 96–97.

[3] *Thoughts* [Temple Classics Edition], 86.

[4] *Thoughts* [York Library Edition], 82.

one has to throw off his mask ? Do you think you can slip away a little before midnight in order to avoid this ? Or are you not terrified by it ? ' [1]

When Martin Buber tells us that ' all real life is meeting,' does meeting mean an unmasked ' I ' with an unmasked ' Thou ? ' If so, an atheist existentialist like Sartre may be right : ' The essence of the relationship between modes of consciousness is not togetherness, it is conflict.' [2] ' Hell is—other people.' [3] Every human encounter, with masks removed, is murder under camouflage.

Our sentimental humanists and all who trust in mere social science to solve the problem of creating community may well stand aghast before the existentialist's analysis of our human situation when seen in its true depth-dimension. But need the Christian take alarm ? Unmasking. Is he not bidden to an unmasking and to a suicide of pride in every approach to Him ' unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known ? ' He is not asked thus to unveil before his fellows. The shame would be unendurable. Not even his nearest and dearest, in truth, could endure the sight. Only He who is both Judge and Saviour will look and not turn His face away.

> Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
> Let me hide myself in Thee.

For, wonder of wonders, when the Rock gives us shelter, even when we unmask and are clothed only in the garment of shame, the terror of solitude is ended. Never less alone than when alone—held safe in everlasting arms.

Is this, however, the only solution for the problem of loneliness to be found under the Gospel —the *terror* of solitude and loneliness removed, but aloneness still man's inescapable fate ? Is the only reply Christianity can make to the cry for community of our era : ' Prepare to meet your God—each one of you for himself alone ? ' This stern reply is, indeed, inevitable, but it is, surely, not all of the answer. It is true that a meeting of autonomous man with autonomous man is ultimately a ' war of all against all.' But the Christian is no longer autonomous man. He meets his Christian brother ' in Christ.' Both have endured an unmasking and a surrender of autonomous heart and will. He who has received that surrender and has endured the sight of that unmasking is present at the meeting. Where two or three are gathered in His name, they are caught up in the miracle of the Communion of Saints.

A picturing of the quest for community, however, as if the individual in his aloneness were the starting point, and community only a distant goal, is, after all, an abstraction. ' God setteth the solitary in families.' Our loneliness already implies communal life as a backdrop to its pain, and the closer we are in contact with our neighbours the greater the sense of loneliness. The title of a recent book, much read in America to-day, *The Lonely Crowd*, epitomizes the paradox. Who can prepare us for a meeting with the inescapable ' Thou ? ' Is there, indeed, an ultimate answer to the problem of loneliness except the Church, the New-Covenant-Life of the Body of Christ ? The very word ' covenant ' is good news—community offered to man as a gift from the Author of life Himself. The mystery of the Church is the climactic revelation of ' the foolishness of God,' a fellowship of unmasked sinners, a community of courage to unveil before the inescapable ' Thou.' In this fellowship the awesome loneliness of repentance is a shared loneliness, the confession of shame a shared confession, and the joy of being forgiven a shared joy—' things into which angels long to look.'

[1] *Either-Or*, ii. 135.
[2] J. P. Sartre, *L'Etre et le Néant*, 502.
[3] *No Exit*, 61.

Literature

DICTIONARY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

A reference book which every instructed churchman, be he student, minister or scholarly layman, should possess is *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, published by the Oxford University Press at 70s. net. The editor is Dr. F. L. Cross, Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford.

This is not another Bible dictionary, though a considerable number of entries on Biblical subjects has been included. Many of the entries are biographical, covering the whole history of the Church down to the present day. The intention is to provide factual information on every aspect of Christianity.

Perhaps the best way to indicate the scope of the dictionary is to take the entries on a page opened at random. Here they are—Moody, D. L., American evangelist (fifty lines) ; Moore, A. L., Anglican theologian (sixteen lines) ; Moral Philosophy (six lines indicating its scope) ; M.R.A. (nine lines) ; Moral Theology (a full page). So if you want to know about the Mozarabic rite, or

when John R. Mott was born or who the Muggletonians were, or what a biretta is, this is the work for your purpose. Fuller study is facilitated by asterisks set before every mention of a name or subject which has its own entry in this dictionary. A special feature of the volume is the full bibliographies which follow the majority of the entries.

The team of learned contributors is listed but no indication is given of the authorship of each article. One cannot but regret that the Scottish historical articles were not checked by some one like the late Professor G. D. Henderson of Aberdeen, for in them there are some inaccuracies. Sir George Adam Smith was born in 1856 not 1858. What is the authority for saying that out of twelve hundred and three ministers of the Church of Scotland at the Disruption four hundred and fifty-one joined the Free Church ? Recent writers give the number as four hundred and seventy-four. For about fifty years now it has been accepted by scholars that John Knox was born about 1515, not 1505 ; and it is strange to find it said that Knox embraced the Reformation under 'the influence of the Lutheran, G. Wishart.' Wishart is believed to have visited both Germany and Switzerland, but since it was the Helvetic Confession that he translated, it would seem that by the time he returned to Scotland his eyes were rather on the Swiss than the Lutheran Reformation. Again, to say that John Spottiswoode was 'Moderator of the Assembly which abolished the presbytery' is too definite a statement. The Glasgow Assembly of 1610 certainly reduced the importance of the presbytery by giving certain of its powers to the bishop, but presbyteries continued to exist and function.

These, however, are but spots on the sun. This is a splendid work, comprehensive and informative. The amount of labour lying behind it must have been colossal ; and we congratulate the editor on his planning of such an enterprise and on his bringing to a successful completion a long and arduous task.

THE GOSPELS

It is safe to say that *The Gospels : Their Origin and their Growth*, by Professor Frederick C. Grant (Harper Brothers, New York ; $3.75), is quite the most important book on the Gospels that has appeared for a considerable time.

Dr. Grant stresses again and again the fact that the Gospels arose in and were the possession of the Church. They embody a social tradition. 'The significance of this view is obvious. The memories of a few individuals might be mistaken—since human recollection is notoriously fallible—but the testimony of a group, even if anonymous, is more likely to have been verified, criticised, supported, culled, and selected during the course of the first generation of Early Church evangelism. The possibility of fabrication, by one or two individuals, is completely ruled out.'

Dr. Grant vividly characterises each of the Four Gospels. Mark is a gospel addressed to and used in a martyr Church—when every member of the Roman Church, in the days of Nero, 'stood in jeopardy every hour.' Luke-Acts is an apologetic work addressed to the outside world to prove that Christianity was not a subversive movement. Matthew is a well organized literary, perhaps even liturgical, work, with the life and teaching of Jesus arranged under five main subject divisions, for purposes of study, teaching, and memorization. John is a dramatic presentation of the life, ministry, death, and glorification of Jesus written for instruction and worship inside the Church, and for interpretation and propaganda outside the Church, and written against a background of Docetism.

Dr. Grant makes a careful analysis of the factors which delayed the production of a written Gospel and of the factors which in the end necessitated such a Gospel. The factors which delayed it were : (1) The early Christians were neither a literary nor even an educated group. (2) Oral transmission was the customary Jewish way of instruction. (3) The cost of materials was high. (4) The expected imminence of the Parousia made writing irrelevant. (5) The difficulty of collecting data was immense. The factors which in the end produced a written gospel were : (1) The Gospels took the place of oral transmission. (2) They were written for the edification of new converts. (3) The Parousia was unexpectedly long delayed and written records became a relevant necessity. (4) There was an inevitable biographical interest in the characters involved in the Gospel events. (5) The Gospels became a necessary weapon in the controversy between Christians and Jews and heretics. (6) They were written to set the facts before Roman officialdom. (7) They were written as instruments of missionary propaganda. (8) They were written with a purely literary interest in certain incomparable passages which they enshrine, for example Mt 7^{28-33}, Lk 24^{13-35}. (9) They were written for liturgical usage. (10) They were used for the encouragement of Christians in the time of persecution. (11) They formulated a kind of incipient canon law. (12) They were presented as to some extent a philosophical apologetic.

No brief review can do justice to this close-packed book. This book will be invaluable to the student and to the teacher ; and, because its interest is always ultimately religious, it will be an enrichment to the preacher who will read it.

We have no doubt that this book will take its place high among the standard works on the Gospels. WILLIAM BARCLAY

SUBJECTIVITY AND PARADOX

The Rev. J. Heywood Thomas, in *Subjectivity and Paradox : A Study of Kierkegaard* (Blackwell ; 18s. net), says quite rightly that the time for general Introductions to Kierkegaard is over. He is already sufficiently 'introduced,' and what is now wanted is Commentary and Explication. Mr. Thomas's book attempts the latter. He takes the two central themes mentioned in the title and deals with them from the philosophical angle. The themes themselves are so important that they carry with them a good deal else of Kierkegaard's teaching.

Kierkegaard refuses to be a philosopher in the accepted formal sense of his day. Against the then current Speculative Philosophy he sets his doctrine of Paradox ; though he is no advocate (and Mr. Thomas does well to emphasize this) of complete irrationalism. That is a libel that has been put upon him. Paradox is 'not the anti-rational but the discontinuous,' as Geismar says. Nor will Mr. Thomas have it that he philosophizes in spite of himself, as Ruggiero has said. Kierkegaard is an acute thinker who is well versed in the philosophy he repudiates (and, indeed, in philosophy generally) and can repudiate it on its own terms.

Mr. Thomas performs his task well, though his style is a little rough—rather in contrast to Kierkegaard's, which at its best is very polished. Mr. Thomas begins by felicitously introducing us to some relevant and lesser known works of Hegel, who looms large in the background. There is a new slant here in Kierkegaard exposition, which is welcome.

Then he deals with Subjectivity in Kierkegaard, taking pains to refute the suggestion that Kierkegaard got the idea from Luther, Baader, Schelling, or Hamann, though, indeed, all had their influence. Kierkegaard himself says he got the term from Lessing who in turn leans on Jacobi. Why not accept this ? Or why not say that Subjectivity is inherent in Christianity itself, which Kierkegaard was wholly concerned to defend and advocate. Christianity is not a philosophy. It is a way of life, a chart for Existence. So Kierkegaard is Existential, and a champion of faith, stressing the need of passion, and giving us a doctrine of life's 'stages.' Faith, of course, is a subjective, individual affair ; hence Kierkegaard's great category the Individual. But faith must have an object too, and Mr. Thomas does well to remind us that Kierkegaard is not a *mere* subjectivist. He holds on to New Testament, nay Chalcedonian, theology as the object of faith, and Bishop Bohlin need not have troubled to accuse Kierkegaard of inconsistency because he advocates both.

A chapter on 'The Existence of God' follows, in which Kierkegaard's great doctrine of the Leap is dealt with. It is really fantastic, as Mr. Thomas sees, to suggest (as Bohlin does) that this doctrine in any sense emanates from Hegel, just because Hegel mentions the word. For it is diametrically opposed to all Hegel stood for. Kant, Schelling, Trendelenberg, Aristotle are all glanced at ; again, they had their influence. But, once more, it is Lessing to whom Kierkegaard attributes the word, though he works out its meaning in his own original way.

We come next to the Absolute Paradox and the possibility of offence, and Mr. Thomas brings out the importance to Kierkegaard here of Hamann and the Fathers, notably Tertullian and Athanasius. To say with Reuter that Kierkegaard's ideas about religious philosophy received their form and character from Hegel is, as Mr. Thomas says, 'to fly in face of all credible evidence.'

The final chapter on Kierkegaard's importance in philosophy is splendid. Kierkegaard's insistence that faith is not proof, his rebuttal of Rationalism and of the empirical error, his insistence on the importance of the person and the meaningfulness of religion, are what the world needs to-day.

Mr. Thomas quotes from many languages, including Danish. There are some slight if forgivable blemishes. For instance, the quotation on p. 6 from *Papirer*, I.A. 94 obscures the force of *efter*. Also the quotation on the same page (I.A. 72) is so truncated as to make nonsense of Mr. Thomas's argument. On p. 8 Mr. Thomas speaks of the 'draft version of a lecture about feeling' by P. M. Möller. There is of course the draft of a lecture by that great man on Affectation (Danish *Affektation*). Does Mr. Thomas mean this? 'Feeling' in Danish is *Affekt*.

T. H. CROXALL

A notable gap in the modern re-appraisal of the evangelical revival of the eighteenth century has been filled by Dr. S. C. Henry's admirable study—*George Whitefield : Wayfaring Witness* (Abingdon Press ; $3.75). A preliminary account of 'The Man,' perhaps a little over-weighted as to his service overseas, effectively conveys the picture of one who, devil to some but saint to many, wielded such extraordinary personal influence, surpassing in some respects that of his colleagues the Wesleys, with their greater abilities and authority. The larger and more important

section surveys Whitefield's 'Message' and its reaction on the Church and the world. Dr. Henry succeeds in showing that the formal and somewhat rigid theology of Whitefield was by no means the index of the larger and warmer faith which inspired his life and empowered his oratory. The story—clear, accurate, and interesting—is fortified by copious notes, a chronology, and a full bibliography.

In *The Continuing Spirit* (Allen and Unwin; 25s. net) Mr. Norman Beasley continues the exposition of Christian Science which he gave to the world a few years ago in 'The Cross and the Crown,' and tells of progress since the death of the founder in 1910. The later work is hardly up to the level of the earlier, but with undiminished confidence he refutes the prophecies of those who predicted the chaos of the Christian Science organisation after the passing of Mrs. Eddy. He is not himself a Christian Scientist, but one would hardly suspect this from the enthusiasm with which he pays tribute to the character and achievements of this outstanding personality in the religious world. The book is over-weighted with statistics and he gives overmuch space to details of litigation which are not of general interest and rather weaken the impression of harmony he wishes to convey. The plan of the book as a whole is not very obvious, and the main arguments do not carry conviction. He certainly supports bravely his contention that Mrs. Eddy was not 'a half-way believer in God,' but he hardly faces the main problem of her inconsistencies and her persistent habit of reaching all the way to her goal by simply denying the reality of the difficulties in the way. It is moreover not quite fair, for example, to quote a very generous tribute from one writer on Christian Science while ignoring altogether the devastating criticisms offered by the same writer.

A Book of Worship for Schools, compiled by H. F. Mathews (Epworth Press), is a most satisfying book. It gives one hundred and three services under seven different headings—God our Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, Living the Christian Life, Members one of Another, Life in the Community, Intercessions, Special Occasions in the Christian Year and in the School Year. There are prose readings from all kinds of sources, wisely and skilfully chosen. There are selected hymns and Scripture passages. And there is the most catholic and magnificent collection of prayers, used throughout the services, that we have seen for a very long time. The astonishing extent to which this writer has cast his net may be seen from successive pages where there are two prayers. One is a prayer used by Admiral Ramsay during the World War 1939–45, and as the prayer of the Fifth Flotilla:

> Grant we pray Thee, O God, that as followers of Christ we may never forget we are observed of all men, and that our failures may cause others to stumble.
>
> Help us to be true and loyal to the best and highest we know, and show forth this truth and loyalty in every activity of our daily life.
>
> Grant unto us the royal gift of courage. Give us, O Lord, a keen sense of honour, so that we may never give ourselves the benefit of the doubt.
>
> And finally we pray for a true sense of humour; may its kindly light and its healing power relax life's tensions. And all this we ask in the Name of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The other is a prayer of King Alfred the Great:

> Lord God Almighty, Shaper and Ruler of all creatures, we pray for Thy great mercy to guide us to Thy will, to make our minds steadfast, to strengthen us against temptation, to put far from us all unrighteousness. Shield us against our foes, seen and unseen; teach us that we may inwardly love Thee before all things with a clean mind and a clean body. For Thou art our Maker and our Redeemer, our Help and our Comfort, our Trust and our Hope, now and ever. Amen.

We wish this book the widest possible use and circulation. Every teacher should have it, and every minister ought to have it. Simply to read it is to be given a liberal education in the finest things of our devotional heritage.

Fully to understand a man and his message we need to consider not only the substance of the teaching but also its relevance to the needs of the age. This principle Dr. Irvonwy Morgan has applied to John Wesley in a series of addresses first given in the U.S.A. and now printed as a small book—*'Twixt the Mount and Multitude* (Epworth Press; 6s. net). Dealing in turn with the origins, power and methods of the Revival, Dr. Morgan shows, in brief but effective outline, how Wesley's message was matched to the hour and adds to the effect of his argument by indicating how much of the Wesley emphasis has been given hospitality in other communions. The final chapter moves forward from past to present to illustrate the social witness of Methodism on the background of contemporary tendencies in theology. Here Dr. Morgan effectively but too briefly takes up R. W. Dale's challenge to Methodists to work out

the ethical implications of Wesley's doctrine of Perfect Love.

The Puritans seem to be coming into their own again. We have noticed several studies in this field of recent years and we are glad to call attention to a book which sets out to describe and evaluate Puritan ascetic theology—*Puritan Devotion*, by the Rev. Gordon Stevens Wakefield, M.A., B.Litt. (Epworth Press; 21s. net). The author, with manifold references to the sources, considers the place of Scripture, Church and Sacraments in Puritan piety and, with a glance at family religion, goes on to discuss prayer and meditation, cases of conscience, perseverance and perfection and holy dying, as he finds these set forth by Puritan authors. This is not only a thorough historical study: it has also a contemporary religious value. There is a useful bibliography.

The Wesleys continue to provide ammunition for field work. In *The Wesleys and the English Language* (Epworth Press; 8s. 6d. net), Mr. G. A. Vallins continues lines opened up by Dr. Henry Bett and others. Here is a study of the twelve page 'Grammar' written for the boys at Kingswood School; and of the 'Dictionary' which, Dr. Johnson notwithstanding, the author assures us he thinks 'the best English dictionary in the world.' Mr. Vallins is able to show that in its proper context the claim is not so absurd. Wesley never pretended to fine writing but a third essay on the syntax of the 'Journal' shows, by many cogent examples, what a fine sense of English prose its author had. The final essay turns to Charles and brings further light on the language, metre, and rhyme of the 'Hymns.' All in all, this is a charming and rewarding contribution to the understanding and appreciation of the two writers.

Professor Jac. J. Müller, Th.D., D.D., is a popular preacher in Afrikaans in the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa. He gave a series of sermons on Eschatology which made a powerful impression and which he was pressed to publish. He has done so in an English version, made by Mr. L. V. Rex—*When Christ Comes Again* (Marshall, Morgan and Scott; 7s. 6d. net).

The course deals with Signs of the Times, Antichrist, the Second Advent, the Resurrection, the Day of Judgment, Hell, Heaven and the New Earth. All through there is a note of evangelism and of urgency. But while there are sermons which as delivered were powerful and moving and seemingly persuasive, they have nothing like the same effect in cold print, and one fears that to a considerable extent that is true here. In dealing especially with the Resurrection, the Judgment, and Hell, the author gets into deep and dark waters, and in 'the New Earth' he is floundering.

Message for a Mission, by Canon O. H. Gibbs-Smith, M.A., Archdeacon of London (Mowbray; 2s. 6d. net), is a plea that a Christian ideology, based on the central theme of the preaching of Christ, which is the Kingdom of God, should be the form of gospel-presentation to be used in a National Mission for the evangelization of the unconverted masses of England. Suggestions are also made for planning such a mission and for the briefing of the missioners, based on an experiment in concerted preaching made a few years ago in London. There are interesting proposals here that churches, other than the author's, might well consider.

The next Lambeth Conference is due in 1958, and in preparation for it the Rev. Dewi Morgan of the S.P.G. has written *The Bishops Come to Lambeth* (Mowbray; 5s. net). It is much more than a review of previous Lambeth Conferences from 1867 onwards. It is also a balanced and engrossing sketch of the spread of the English Church overseas, showing how that spread overseas provoked controversies, as the name of Colenso reminds us, and how it was achieved not because of, but often in spite of, the plans and prejudices of influential leaders. For a non-Anglican this is a good introduction to Anglican history; for an Anglican it will provide stimulus and hope.

Bible Words in Living Language, by Dr. Luther A. Weigle (Nelson; 10s. 6d. net), consists largely of a series of short articles which were originally answers to correspondents. Dr. Weigle himself explains their purpose. 'Their purpose is to explain the meaning of the Authorized Version where its language is no longer easily understood or does not accurately represent the ancient text. At the same time they give the reasons for many of the changes that have been made in the Revised Standard Version of the Bible.'

This is a very helpful book for the non-technical reader of the Bible, and will remove many misconceptions. 'I prevented the dawning of the morning' (Ps 119^{147}) is indeed an unintelligible statement to the person who does not know that *prevent* literally means to *precede*, and that the text really means 'I rise before dawn.' Dr. Weigle points out that 'the word *conversation* in the Authorized Version of the Bible always refers to conduct, behaviour, or manner of life, and is never used in the sense that it has to-day as a

term for the give and take of talk.' John 1[5] : 'The light shineth in the darkness ; and the darkness comprehended it not,' most probably really means : 'The darkness has not overcome it.' More than children have been not a little perplexed by the famous saying of Jesus : '*Suffer* little children to come unto me.' A puzzling picture is made clearer when we discover that 'we took up our *carriages* and went up to Jerusalem' (Ac 21[15]) really means 'We took up our *baggage*.' 'To strain at a gnat' is probably not a printer's error for 'to strain out a gnat,' as both Lightfoot and Trench thought, but probably comes from a colloquial phrase meaning 'to strain out a liquid at the sight of a gnat.'

This is a book full of interest ; but we wish that it had been published in a much cheaper form. This ought to have been regarded as a popular book, for the plain fact is that anyone with any kind of New Testament knowledge does not need it. It would have been far better to publish it as a paper-back so that it could have circulated amongst the people whom scholarly works do not normally reach.

There is no better translation of the Bible than the American *Revised Standard Version*. And it is good news for persons of moderate means that its vast sales have made a cheap edition possible. Messrs. Nelson have issued one at the remarkably low price of 12s. 6d.—in this country the lowest price before was thirty shillings. The volume is attractive in every way and strongly bound.

Finney's Life and Lectures, by Mr. William Henry Harding (Oliphants ; 8s. 6d. net), is mainly a reprint of the famous lectures on Revivals of Religion by the American evangelist, the Rev. Charles G. Finney. The editor has added brief notes and a sketch of Finney's life and labours. Not all will agree with some of Finney's opinions ; but no one can read these pages without being both instructed and challenged. We wish them many readers.

Paul's Use of the Old Testament, by Assistant Professor E. Earle Ellis, B.Sc., M.A., B.D., Ph.D. (Oliver and Boyd ; 21s. net), is a book by a specialist written for specialists. It has chapters on Paul and His Bible, Paul and Judaism, Paul and the Apostolic Church, Pauline Exegesis. It has appendices of all Paul's Old Testament quotations and allusions. Paul quotes the Old Testament ninety-three times. He quotes from sixteen Old Testament books. Thirty-three of his quotations are from the Pentateuch, twenty-five from Isaiah and nineteen from the Psalms. This book not only amply fulfils its main aim, but also illumines many things in the passing, as for instance the connexion of Paul with the Pastoral Epistles. This is a work of painstaking and meticulous scholarship, and it must take its place as a standard work. It is a necessary addition to every scholarly library of New Testament literature.

We have good news for students and teachers of the early history of the Church. For some years the late B. J. Kidd's 'Documents Illustrative of the History of the Church' has been out of print and copies have seldom been obtainable second-hand. At last there has appeared a new work, based upon the earlier part of the collection edited by Kidd. It is entitled *A New Eusebius : Documents illustrative of the History of the Church to A.D. 337*, edited by J. Stevenson (S.P.C.K. ; 21s. net).

Some of Kidd's selected passages have been dropped, but others have been added. The notes and chronological tables, so far as we have sampled them, are most useful, and we agree with the claim of the publishers that the modern student will find this handsome volume an essential part of his equipment. The editor has contrived to present an almost continuous background for the history of the period down to the death of Constantine.

May we look for a second volume, corresponding roughly to Kidd's second volume, and coming down to A.D. 461 or later ?

In this pamphlet—*The Gospel and the Religions*, translated from the German (S.C.M. ; 3s. net)—Professor Walter Freytag of Hamburg maintains that among the living religions of the world Christianity is a unique phenomenon because, as he affirms, it is the witness for God's revelation in Christ, 'the Gospel,' over against all religions. Christianity and 'the Gospel,' however, are differentiated, standing to one another in a polar relationship. Christianity itself, it is alleged, 'has revelation only in faith ; *i.e.*, as a community of pardoned sinners.' So regarded, 'the religions' are represented as 'a challenge to our faith.'

The Epistle of James, by the Rev. C. E. B. Cranfield (S.C.M. ; 1s. net), consists of Four Studies prepared for an S.C.M. General Conference at Swanwick. In its sixteen pages this pamphlet provides a brief introduction, studies on The Right Hearing of the Word, Of Respect of Persons, Of True Faith, and Of Right Speaking. Each study is ended with questions for further discussion. It was certainly worth while publishing these studies and Bible Study groups will find them of real value.

Jesus and the Centurion: Matthew viii. 5-10

By Professor S. H. Hooke, D.D., London

In his valuable monograph *Jesu Verheissung für die Völker* (Kohlhammer, 1956) Professor J. Jeremias discusses the story of the healing of the centurion's servant as one of the two cases in which Jesus breaks through the limitation which He had imposed upon Himself, namely, the restriction of His healing activity to Israel. These are Professor Jeremias's words: 'We meet with what is essentially the same situation in the story of the centurion. Jesus' answer to the Gentile's request should be read as a question, "Shall I come and heal him?", as is shown by a comparison with Jn 4^{48}. Again Jesus brusquely refuses, and again the Gentile's answer is a confession of faith. The Syriac versions suggest that in the original Aramaic the centurion's answer may have read: "You need only give the order and my servant will be healed, for I too have authority over the soldiers under my command" (Mt 8^{9}), that is to say, "You are the Lord, all power is yours, you can command the spirits." Once again Jesus yields to the suppliant's faith.'

While I agree with the treatment of the two cases of the Syrophœnician woman and the centurion as exceptions to Jesus' general rule of confining His ministry to Israel, I think that in Professor Jeremias's interpretation certain important implications of the story are missed. First there are two textual points that call for consideration.

Professor Jeremias wishes to read the words, 'I will come and heal him' (omitted by Luke), as a question, and refers to Jn 4^{48} in support of his suggestion. In the Johannine story Jesus' first reply to the plea of the father is, 'Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe,' and C. K. Barrett has pointed out in his Commentary on the Fourth Gospel that, although WH margin puts a question mark after *πιστεύσητε*, yet 'the strong negation is less intelligible as an interrogative.'[1] There is no textual justification for inserting a question mark into the Matthaean narrative at this point. Moreover, while I agree that the Johannine story is probably based on the Synoptic story, yet the general way in which the author of the Fourth Gospel treats material from the Synoptic Gospels makes it somewhat precarious to argue from the one to the other.

[1] C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, p. 207.

Much more important is the textual point raised in the treatment of the centurion's words to Jesus. Here Professor Jeremias appeals to the Syriac versions in support of his exegesis of the centurion's words, a point to which we shall return. But first the question arises whether we are entitled to assume that the conversation between Jesus and the centurion would have been carried on in Aramaic. It is generally agreed that the inhabitants of Palestine in the time of Jesus were largely bilingual, and it can hardly be doubted that Jesus spoke Greek as well as Aramaic; for instance, Pilate's examination of Jesus can hardly have been conducted in any language but Greek. The centurion was undoubtedly a Gentile, and it is most probable that he would have addressed Jesus in Greek, hence the appeal to an original Aramaic, which Professor Jeremias has used so brilliantly in many other passages, is open to question in this instance. Secondly, the Syriac versions are themselves translations from a Greek original, and as translations they are liable to represent an interpretation of the text which they are translating. The accepted Greek text of Mt 8^{9} runs: *καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπός εἰμι ὑπὸ ἐξουσιαν, ἔχων ὑπ' ἐμαυτὸν στρατιώτας*. With regard to this Professor Jeremias says in the footnote on p. 26 of his book, 'The existing Greek text makes the centurion utter two strangely conflicting statements: first, that he is a man under authority, and therefore knows how to obey; then, that he has soldiers under him, and therefore knows how to command. The Syriac versions show that the centurion's words only envisage his own possession of authority.' Examination of the Syriac versions suggests a process of re-interpretation of the Greek text which they had before them. The following is the position with regard to the chief Syriac versions:

(*a*) The Peshitta has: *'aph 'ēna gēr gabra 'na dat^{e}ḥēth shultana, w^{e}'ith t^{e}ḥēth 'idi 'estratiōtē*, 'I also am a man under authority, and there are under my hand soldiers.'

(*b*) The Curetonian Syriac has: *'aph 'ēna gēr gabra 'na dat^{e}ḥēth shultana, w^{e}'ith li shultana 'aph li, w'estratiōtē 'ith t^{e}ḥēth 'idi*, 'I also am a man under authority, and I also have authority, and soldiers are under my hand.'

(*c*) The Sinaitic Syriac has: *'aph 'ēna gēr gabra 'na d^{e}'ith li shultana, w^{e}'stratiōtē 'ith t^{e}ḥēth 'idi*, 'I

also am a man who has authority, and there are soldiers under my hand.'

The Palestinian Syriac, which Professor Jeremias also quotes, follows the Sinaitic with slight variations, but with the same sense.

It would seem that we have here, first, a literal rendering of the Greek text in the Peshitta; secondly, an intermediate version in the Curetonian Syriac, which preserves the words 'I *too* am a man *under* authority,' and also inserts the words 'and I also *have* authority,' apparently as an alternative rendering of the first clause; thirdly, the Sinaitic Syriac drops the first rendering, and retains only the second.

So I would suggest that these variant renderings of the main Syriac versions point rather to an attempt, partial in the Curetonian, and complete in the Sinaitic, to remove what seemed to be the implication of the Greek text, namely, that Jesus Himself was under authority, an idea which may have seemed irreverent to the Syriac translators. We have an example of such a change in the alteration of the *οὐκ ἠδύνατο . . . ποιῆσαι* in Mk 6^5 to *οὐκ ἐποίησεν* in Mt 13^{58}. It may also be added that the apparent contradiction in the centurion's words can hardly be taken as a serious argument against the genuineness of the Greek text. An officer in the centurion's position was necessarily both under the authority of the higher command, and in authority over his own section of the Roman army, and it is this double aspect of authority which, to my mind, gives the whole point of the centurion's words, and explains the emotion of joyful surprise which they rouse in the mind of Jesus, and it is this which is partially lost or obscured by the change advocated by Professor Jeremias.

I would offer the following considerations, with the proviso that what I have to say is based on the Matthaean form of the story, which I regard as the more authentic, since the personal encounter of the centurion with Jesus is an essential part of the story, and this is omitted by Luke.

In the first place, we have stress laid on the fact that Jesus was surprised (*ἐθαύμασε*) at the centurion's words, and said that the faith which they displayed was of a different kind from anything He had found in Israel. Why was Jesus surprised, and wherein did the centurion's faith differ from other instances of faith which Jesus had met with during the early period of His ministry?

In the story of the healing of the leper, which I believe Matthew has intentionally placed in juxtaposition with the story of the centurion, the leper shows a type of faith in Jesus' ability to heal him which does not seem to have met with Jesus' approval, although He responded to the call of need, as always. The leper thought of Jesus as possessing a power which He could use as He pleased, 'If thou wilt'—He could heal or refuse to heal as He felt inclined. I think that this explains the use of the word *ἐμβριμησάμενος* as expressing Jesus' attitude towards the implications of the leper's words. But the centurion's faith was of a very different order. His words 'I, *too*, am a man under authority' imply that he, in contrast to the leper, recognized that Jesus' exercise of healing power was not the arbitrary activity of a wonder-worker, but that He used this power at the bidding of a higher authority. He perceived in Jesus an activity analogous to his own. He knew that soldiers obeyed him because his word was, in the last resort, the word of the emperor; the authority he exercised was not his own, but the authority, backed by the might, of Rome. He perceived, and it was this that caused Jesus' delighted surprise, that Jesus too was under authority, and that every exercise of power was in obedience to what is so repeatedly emphasized in the Fourth Gospel, the Father's commandment; 'the Son can do nothing but what he seeth the Father do,' and again, 'as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do.' Professor Jeremias has rightly pointed out the emphasis which Jesus laid on *humility* (p. 63) with regard to the activities of the Kingdom, and his insistence on the fact that it was God who alone did all; man was only an instrument. It is surely permissible to see in the centurion's words something deeper than a mere acknowledgment of Jesus' power over spirits, something that showed a perception of the pattern of the Kingdom, a recognition of Jesus' own attitude towards His exercise of His healing ministry, an attitude which so fully agrees with Professor Jeremias's insistence on Jesus' restriction of that ministry to Israel. That limitation was an example of Jesus' humility, of His obedience to the Father's commandment. The centurion might have felt that he was not worthy (*ἱκανός*) to receive Jesus under his roof, but Jesus felt that he was worthy to be received into the Kingdom of God and to sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jesus saw in him an anticipation of that ingathering (*Wallfahrt*) of the Gentiles which Professor Jeremias has so clearly brought out in his book.[1]

[1] In fairness to Professor Jeremias I should point out that Professor Black, in his book *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*,[2] 116–117, supports Professor Jeremias's suggestion that the Sinaitic Syriac may have preserved the true translation of the original Aramaic. But the question whether the centurion would have spoken Aramaic still remains to be answered.

Devotional and Pastoral Classics

Thomas à Kempis' 'The Imitation of Christ'

By Dr. Olive Wyon, Formerly Principal of St. Colm's Missionary College, Edinburgh

The Imitation is unique. Its appeal is universal, and it is never out of date. Like any other significant book, however, it sprang out of a particular situation.

Its author lived through the closing years of the fourteenth, and far on into the fifteenth century (*c.* A.D. 1380–1471). This was a period of great social and spiritual change, and often of great distress. It covers the disastrous era of the 'Babylonish Captivity' (1305–1377), followed by the still greater scandal of the Great Schism (1378–1417). In 1398 the Black Death raged in Holland as well as in England, and there were further devastating epidemics of plague in the Low Countries in 1440, 1450, 1453, and 1458. Many monasteries were destroyed by the ravages of war and pestilence, and the surviving monks wandered about Western Europe leading careless and often disreputable lives. The Church was often weak and corrupt, and war and plague caused untold human misery. After some abortive attempts at religious reform in the fourteenth century, Northern Europe produced several reform movements, led by Wycliffe, Huss, and Gerard Groot.

Groot was a great preacher; people flocked to hear him and many became true Christian disciples. It was for these converts that he founded a society called the 'Brothers and Sisters of the Common Life.' Some of its members lived dedicated lives in their own homes, but many lived in small unofficial communities; they did not take monastic vows, but lived lives of prayer and service, especially in the realm of education. This movement spread throughout the Netherlands; the best known Houses were at Deventer and Windesheim. This reform movement was known as the *Devotio Moderna.*[1] The finest elements in this 'New Devotion' are preserved in *The Imitation of Christ,* by Thomas à Kempis. Thomas Hemerken of Kempen (a little town not far from Cologne) was born about the end of the year 1380. Thomas went to his first school in Kempen; at the age of twelve he was sent to Deventer, to a school kept by the Brothers of the Common Life. Here he came under the care of Groot's successor, Florentius Radewyn, a great and good man for whom Thomas had a deep and reverent affection. At the age of eighteen or nineteen Thomas entered the convent of Mount St. Agnes near Zwolle. Here, on this green hill rising out of flat meadow country Thomas à Kempis spent practically the whole of his life till he died on the 25th of July 1471, at the age of ninety-one.

Outwardly, his life was uneventful, although its background was full of change and stir. For nearly seventy-three years Thomas lived a quiet life of prayer, study and writing as one of the Canons Regular of St. Augustine at Mount St. Agnes. He wrote a great deal. Some forty works have been recently collected in a critical edition, three of which are outstanding: *The Soliloquium*; the *De elevatione mentis ad inquirendum summum bonum*: and the four short treatises which are known as the *De Imitatio Christi* (or *The Ecclesiastical Music*). His earliest biographer says of Thomas Hemerken: 'As he taught others, so he lived; he fulfilled in very deed, or verified in himself what he recommended in his discourses should be done.' In 1494 the Carthusian Prior at Nürnberg speaks of Thomas à Kempis as 'That most wise, most sweet, and most religious man.'

One of the elements in *The Imitation* which gives it its ageless appeal is the fact that it springs out of life, and is solely concerned with fundamental questions.

A brief analysis of *The Imitation* gives very little idea of its quality.[2] Book I is concerned with the need of renunciation. Book II is a more direct introduction to the inward life, dwelling on the kind of preparation needed if we are to respond truly to God's work in our hearts through Christ. Book III is nearly as long as the other three parts of the book put together; its theme is friendship with God. The 'Love of Jesus' which has only been mentioned incidentally, as it were, hitherto,

[1] Cf. S. Axters, *Geschiedenis van de Vroomheid in de Nederlanden,* iii. 170 ff.

[2] In this article I quote from the version to which I am accustomed. The new translation in the *Penguin Classics,* however, has the great merit of being written in modern English. This makes its appeal far more direct. We feel that Thomas is saying: 'This means *you*!'

is now the whole subject of thought and prayer. It is presented in dialogue form, and is permeated with the spirit of adoring prayer. Book IV is rather different in style from the other three sections, but the main ideas of Book III are here transposed into the key of Eucharistic devotion. Here private and personal prayer merges into and is sustained by the prayer and worship of the Church Universal.

Professor Stephanus Axters, O.P., the great authority on the spirituality of the Low Countries [1] points out that Thomas à Kempis gathers up and uses the best elements in all the spiritual writers of the day (Groote, Radewyn, Gerlac Peters and others); thus '*The Imitation* . . . represents the best in the contribution of the Low Countries to Christian spirituality.' [2]

Before we consider the content and message of this book one question is often raised, which needs to be answered: is *The Imitation of Christ* a 'mystical' book or not? If by 'mysticism' we mean 'union with God' here and now in this life upon earth, in the manner in which many saints have experienced it, then the answer must be: this book deals rather with the way to union with God than with that union itself. At the same time here and there are expressions of adoration and joy which suggest that the writer himself knew and experienced a great deal more than he has disclosed in this book, which after all is intended to help serious seekers after the truth, but does not lay down any hard and fast rules about the outcome of this practice of the spiritual life. All this Thomas wisely leaves unsaid.

Thomas à Kempis has a lasting message because the situations with which he deals recur, in some form or another, in every age. In the world of our own day, for instance, where so often personal values are threatened, and the Christian doctrine of man has to be affirmed very strongly against so much materialistic pressure, Thomas speaks with quiet wisdom about 'human nature'. All that he says is based, implicitly, upon the fact that—in the words of Kierkegaard—'it is the God-relationship which makes a man a man.' In his long life he had plenty of opportunity to observe all kinds of people in detail. And in his own inimitable way again and again he touches the spot by some acute remark. For instance, he is rather scathing about 'learnéd men' who 'are anxious to seem learnéd to others, and to be called wise' (I. ii.). Here too is a severe warning to theologians: 'What will it avail thee to be engaged in profound reasonings concerning the Trinity if thou be void of humility, and art thereby displeasing to the Trinity?' (I. i.).

[1] The *Spirituality of the Old Low Countries*, tr. D. Attwater [1954].

[2] *Ib.*, 74.

Life, after all, matters most, and prayer and theology alike must be rooted in and impregnated with true life if we are to be what God means us to be: 'Truly, at the day of judgment, we shall not be examined as to what we have read, but as to what we have done; not as to how well we have spoken, but as to how religiously we have lived' (I. iii.).

Thomas constantly reminds us of our human weakness—a truth which is very unpalatable to the proud and self-sufficient person. All he says on this point rings true: 'We are all frail, but do thou esteem none more frail than thyself' (I. ii.). 'Occasions do not make a man frail, but they shew what he is' (I. xvi.). 'Good cause have we therefore to humble ourselves, and never to have any great conceit of ourselves: since we are so frail and inconstant' (I. xxii.).

He knows, too, how difficult it is even for 'good' people to accept criticism, even when it is unjustified. One cannot help thinking that at some time or another he must have himself suffered much from the 'tongues of slanderers': 'It is no small wisdom to keep silence in an evil time, and in thy heart to turn thyself unto Me, and not to be troubled by the judgement of men. Let not thy peace depend on the tongues of men; for, whether they judge well of thee or ill, thou art not on that account other than thyself' (III. xxviii.). 'What harm can the words . . . of any man do thee? He hurteth himself rather than thee. . . . Do thou have God before thine eyes, and contend not with peevish words' (III. xxxvi.). Sometimes of course we richly deserve sharp criticism and Thomas recognizes this when he says: 'Because thou art afraid to be despised, therefore thou art not willing to be reproved for thy faults, but seekest the shelter of excuses' (III. xlvi.). There is a world of heartfelt experience in the short prayer which springs up so naturally after a long meditation on 'the endurance of injuries': 'O Lord, let that become possible to me by Thy grace which by nature seems impossible' (III. xix.). Another fault to which we are all prone is careless speech; Thomas evidently knows that this is a danger to the inner life as well as to any healthy community life, and he speaks very strongly about it: 'Often times,' he complains, 'I could wish that I had held my peace when I have spoken, and that I had not been in company!' (I. x.); speaking of the gossipy sort of person who says 'a word in your ear . . . this is for you alone,' and then goes away and says the same thing to some one else he says: 'Grant me to observe truth and constancy in my words and remove far from me a crafty tongue' (III. xlv.).

As a corrective for such faults, as well as for itself, Thomas lays a good deal of stress on the need for solitude and silence—a reminder that we

all need in an age of hurry and speed and noise : ' In silence and stillness a religious soul advantageth itself and learneth the mysteries of Holy Scripture ' (I. xx.).

These shrewd practical ' admonitions ' need to be read in the light of the fundamental thesis of this book : that God is the beginning and the end of all things—a truth greatly needed in an age when—in the words of Ellul : ' the end has been . . . effaced by the means. . . . In this terrible dance of means which have been unleashed no one knows where we are going, the aim of life has been forgotten. . . . Man has set out at tremendous speed—to go nowhere.' [1] All through *The Imitation*, in various ways, the writer impresses upon us the one truth : that *God is the end for which we have been made*—and *there is no other* : ' All therefore is vanity, except to love God and serve Him only. For he that loveth God with all his heart is neither afraid of death, nor of punishment, nor of judgment, nor of hell ; for perfect love gives access to God ' (I. xxiv.). Therefore, ' let nothing be great unto thee, nothing high, nothing pleasing, nothing acceptable, but only God Himself, or that which is of God. . . . God alone is everlasting and of infinite greatness, filling all creatures ; the comfort of the soul and the true joy of the heart ' (II. v.). This comes out most clearly in the lovely chapter (III. xxi.), entitled *That we are to rest in God above all His gifts and benefits*, which begins thus : ' Above all things and in all things, O my soul, thou shalt rest in the Lord alway, for He Himself is the everlasting rest of the saints,' and continues in a burst of praise and adoration. The same confidence and conviction is expressed more soberly at the end of Book III. in the chapter headed : *That all our hope and trust are to be fixed on God alone.* ' I had rather choose to be a pilgrim on earth with Thee, than without Thee to possess heaven. Where thou art, there is heaven ; and where Thou art not, there is death and hell ' (III. lix.).

Since God alone is the whole meaning of life, only those who turn to Him with all their hearts are wise and happy. The Third book begins with a beautiful introduction : ' Blesséd are the ears which gladly receive the pulses of the divine whisper and give no heed to the many whisperings of this world. . . . Blesséd are they that enter far into inward things, and endeavour to prepare themselves more and more, by daily exercises, for the receiving of heavenly secrets. Blesséd are they who are glad to have time to spare for God, and who shake off all worldly hindrances ' (III. i.). This conversion (or ' reconversion ') goes on all through life, and consists in an ever deepening desire and effort to love and serve God in singleness of mind and purity of heart—a heart and will set on Him alone : ' By two wings a man is lifted up from things earthly, namely by Simplicity and Purity. Simplicity ought to be in our intention ; purity in our affections. Simplicity doth tend towards God ; Purity doth apprehend and taste Him ' (II. iv.). ' Blesséd are the single-hearted ; for they shall enjoy much peace ' (I. xi.). Since God is our final end, all self-seeking must be gradually eliminated, ' for if in anything thou seekest thyself, immediately thou faintest and driest up ' (III. ix.). Above all, he urges us to ' keep close to Jesus, both in life and in death, and commit thyself unto His faithfulness, who when all fail, can alone help thee. Thy Belovéd is of such a nature that He will admit of no rival ; but will have thy heart alone, and sit on His own throne as King ' (II. vii.).

Another title for *The Imitation* is *The Ecclesiastical Music*, and the title is apt. For the music of the ' inner life ' resounds throughout the whole four ' books,' and the theme which binds all these movements into a unity is the wonder of the Love of God : ' The noble love of Jesus impels a man to do great things, and stirs him up to be always longing for what is more perfect ' (III. v.). Yet even at points of exaltation Thomas never forgets that such a love requires a total response, in obedience and in the will, and not merely in feeling. So he prays : ' Set me free from evil passions, and heal my heart of all inordinate affections that being inwardly cured and thoroughly cleansed, I may be made fit to love, courageous to suffer, steady to persevere ' (III. v.). At the same time he is also aware of the dangers of an unbalanced piety, and warns his readers in plain language that ' a man's worthiness is not to be estimated by the number of visions and comforts which he may have, or by his skill in the Scriptures ' but he must ' be grounded in true humility and full of divine charity ' (III. iv.).

Again and again Thomas insists that the way of discipleship is the way of self-offering. Every day should begin with ' a daily oblation ' of ourselves. And this theme of self-offering is expanded in the fourth Book where he urges us to offer ourselves wholly to God, in union with the self-offering of Christ on the Cross for our sins.

To live with this great little book over a long period is the way to enter into its precious teaching. It is no wonder that it speaks to the ' universal heart of Christendom ' for the ' saints of all communions are the saints of One Communion.' [2] Thomas à Kempis is of this select company, for it is true of him, as of all who transcend confessional barriers, that those who are very near to the Cross ' are near enough to touch each other.'

[1] Jacques Ellul, *The Presence of the Kingdom*, tr. by O. Wyon, 69.

[2] W. E. Sangster, *The Pure in Heart*, 95 and 91.

In the Study

Virginibus Puerisque

What Sort of Christmas?

By H. F. Mathews, M.A., Ph.D., Alsager, Cheshire

'Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.'—Lk 2^{15}.

'This is a strange Scripture lesson,' I thought, as I sat in the corner of the class-room, listening. The student teacher had asked her class to bring a few Christmas cards from home, and they had brought over a hundred. Everyone was holding them up at once. 'Tell us what yours is like,' the teacher said to a girl at the back. She described an old coaching-inn, with snow all round the door, and the panting horses clattering into the yard with the heavy stage-coach, its windows all steamed up, and the outside passengers on the box blue with cold. 'Now read the verse inside,' the teacher went on, and we listened to a sentimental rhyme about 'good cheer.'

We went on to another card. Robins this time, perched on a snow-covered bough; and the verse was some doggerel about 'merriment all the year through.' Next we had a party scene with balloons and funny hats. Then a man with huge side-whiskers, dressed in the stiff white collar and cravat of Victorian days, pouring wine from a huge decanter. Crinolines, log cabins, coloured crackers, holly with red berries, a picture of Swiss mountains, two lovers under the mistletoe.

Suddenly the teacher stopped us. 'You haven't shown me a single *Christmas* card yet,' she said, 'nor have you read me a single word about the greatest thing that ever happened on earth.' Then, very quietly, she read St. Luke's marvellous story of the simple shepherds who came down the hill to gaze in wonder at a tiny Baby in a manger at Bethlehem. She didn't spoil it—wise teacher that she was!—by talking about it or trying to explain it. She didn't even ask the children why the Christmas cards bore all the other symbols but never hinted at the real meaning of the festival.

When she had finished reading, the whole room was hushed, though we had all heard the story many times before. She tiptoed across the room, opened the gramophone she had placed there, and presently the music of Handel's great chorus 'Hallelujah' from the *Messiah* began to fill the air. Soon, the bell rang to tell us that it was the end of the lesson. We had all learned, without being told directly, the right way to celebrate Christmas.

Of course we ought to be glad. Of course we ought to send greetings to our friends, because Christ's coming has made us all into friends. Of course we ought to give presents, if only to remind us of the greatest present of all—God's Gift to us in Jesus. Of course we do well to go home for Christmas, for the coming of Jesus to a lowly stable has made 'home' one of the most precious words in our language. But let us never grow so excited about it all that we forget to hear what God was saying to us at Bethlehem. What sort of a Christmas will you be having? Will it be a Christian Christmas, or only a 'merry Xmas'?

At Euston they have built a splendid new waiting-hall for people who are expecting friends to arrive by train from the north. You sit in a comfortable chair and watch an indicator, which tells you whether the train was on time when it left Rugby, and then Tring, and finally Watford. Then you know that it is 'coming shortly,' for Watford is only fifteen miles away. In a few minutes a number on the indicator shows at which platform the train will arrive. Soon you are standing on a trolley, craning your neck to catch a first glimpse of your friends. There are hands waving, frantic jostling, excited greetings, all the thrill of meeting in London.

How different it was when the Christ-Child slipped quietly into the world at Bethlehem! No one to indicate His coming; no crowds to welcome Him at the inn; none but a few shepherds who brought their simple homage before the Wise Men came from the far country.

We must see to it this Christmas-time that, amid all the excitement of puddings and parties and pillow-cases (stockings are a bit old-fashioned nowadays), we bow low to worship Him whom prophets and seers failed fully to see, but who came to be our Lord and our Saviour.

The Sputnik

By the Reverend Maurice Dean, B.A., Hanley Castle, Worcs.

'That which was lacking . . . they have supplied.' —1 Co 16^{17}.

Most of you have been reading about space ships and space travel in your children's papers for some time. Little did you, or any of us, really

believe that anybody would actually get a space ship launched within our lifetime, but the Russians have done it and we've all heard those mysterious little 'peep-peeps' over the radio as the satellite rushes round the earth at something like eighteen thousand miles an hour. What surprised everyone even more was the news that part of the rocket which had launched it was also travelling round and round the earth, chasing the satellite. At first it was hundreds of miles behind, then it caught up, and now it has overtaken the satellite and is careering on in front of it.

Now while everyone feels that he really must congratulate the Russian scientists on their wonderful achievement not a few people are very worried as to what the launching of the satellite might mean. We know only too well that unless such scientific skill is used only for peaceful purposes it constitutes a very great danger to the peace of the world. But we wouldn't have any fear at all if we could be sure that the nations which are making rockets and missiles and satellites were only going to use them for good and helpful purposes.

You'll often hear it said that man's scientific cleverness has got ahead of his goodness. Like the satellite, it is rushing ahead. But the rocket caught the satellite up and even managed to overtake it. Wouldn't it be wonderful if our love and concern for one another, of the Russians for us and for the Americans and the Japs and everyone else, and our concern for the Russians and everyone else caught up with our scientific cleverness and went hand in hand with it or even overtook it? That would ensure that all our wonderful discoveries were used solely to make life better for everyone. And it can be done, you know. That's why the Church of Christ goes on bravely in the world making more and more people care for one another. Perhaps few of us feel that we will ever be clever enough to play a part in the great advance of science, but every one of us can help to see that goodness and love catch up with discovery and lead it.

St. Paul in one of his letters to the Corinthians offered deep thanks to God for the faithful Christians who were doing so much good in the world. 'I rejoice,' he says, 'at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part they supplied. For they refreshed my spirit and yours.' And in exactly the same way we can supply what is lacking in love and goodness. In doing so we shall refresh the minds and spirits of all who know us and make the world a better place where all men's fears will be dispelled.[1]

[1] Printed before the launching of the second Sputnik.—Ed.

The Christian Year

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

The Paradoxes of our Ministry[2]

III. 'As dying, and, behold, we live'

BY THE REVEREND DOUGLAS STEWART, M.A., LONDON

1. 'I don't want to die. I hate the thought of dying. Yet death is coming for me in a little while now, just as right now I'm watching it come to the brown leaves of the maples and the beech trees' yellow leaves that drift by my window this cold day in October.'

These sentences come from the opening page of a book called *Men Against Death*, a history of significant medical discoveries written by an American called Paul de Kruif. And they express the human situation vividly enough. 'In the midst of life we are in death.' In the very beginning of European literature Homer also likened the generations of men to the generations of leaves. 'As living, and, behold, we die' is the paradox of natural man which St. Paul boldly transposes into the Christian key 'as dying, and, behold, we live.'

This is the ineluctable choice which confronts us all. We must accept one or other of these paradoxes and make it our own. We can, as natural men, have a living death: we can, as Christian men, have a dying life. Choosing life we can inherit death. Choosing death we can inherit life. These are our ultimate possibilities.

Perhaps it is necessary to spend a moment on the pagan choice since it has a way of creeping back into Christian thought and judgment without our noticing its return. The choice of life is universally appealing and it can be given a superficially Christian appearance. Man's war against disease and pain, for example, which Paul de Kruif describes, is a great story in itself and is an illustration of compassion at work which can appeal directly to the example of our Lord in the Gospels. By no possibility could it be called unchristian or anti-Christian, and yet, pursued single-mindedly, it can lead us to a thoroughly unchristian position. A position, that is, in which death is simply resisted in a pagan manner and simply feared as pagans always have and always will fear it. The end-product can so easily become that described by Mr. C. S. Lewis in *The Screwtape Letters*. There the devil writes: 'How much better for us if *all* humans died in costly nursing homes amid doctors who

[2] A sermon in this series—the Paradoxes in 2 Co 6 8-10—will appear each month.—Ed.

lie, nurses who lie, friends who lie, as we have trained them, promising life to the dying, encouraging the belief that sickness excuses every indulgence, and even, if our workers know their job, withholding all suggestion of a priest lest it should betray to the sick man his true condition ! '

This is a direct hit on suburban Christianity which has never accepted the fact that we are ' as dying ' and which clings with modern social optimism to the illusion that we can circumvent death by medicine. The whole world of sociological optimism in our time is founded on illusion. It is built upon a profound cosmological pessimism. What do our medical and scientific advances matter ultimately to a form of life proliferating on a speck of dust in the Milky Way ? We are ' as living, and, behold, we die ' whether the ultimate explosion is triggered off by man or comes from outer space. Ours is a living death.

2. The Christian paradox reverses the pagan paradox. Death must be first accepted—death not life. But, of course, this is not simply an intellectual assent to the death of the race and to my personal mortality. Many honest and courageous pagans achieve that. The Christian mystery is first the acceptance of the death of Christ. Here Gospel and Epistle are at one, for in the Gospels the ministry is told as a prelude to the great hour, the hour of the Passion, and in the Apostolic teaching of the Epistles the Passion stands as the central redeeming act. The Christian life is sustained by the sacraments and they rotate upon the death and resurrection of Christ.

' Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death ? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death : that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.'

' For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.'

Is it too dangerous to attempt at this point to reduce Christian experience to simple comprehensible terms ? By love, my life and death are assumed by Christ : by faith, His life and death are assumed by me. Does that over-simplify the words of the Apostle ? ' Ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God.' ' I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.'

My death has already occurred. It was experienced, not by me, but by Christ. From Him, in Him, I must myself experience it, but as I do so I rise also in the power of His resurrection. We are ' as dying, and, behold, we live.' ' The dying life ' of Christ becomes the central principle of my being.

Leaving aside speculation as to the metaphysics of this, the fact remains, a fact observable by faithful and unbelieving alike. Those who are ' in Christ ' are ' as dying ' and behold they live.

The Church, for example, is always dying. How often has its end been most confidently asserted. And how good have the reasons adduced been for the assertion. So frequently the face presented to the world is anachronistic : so frequently facing the needs of mankind the Church has been impotent. And so men have prophesied that this anachronistic and impotent institution must disappear from history. They have not understood the mystery of the Church's life. She lives beyond death—beyond the death of Christ. She lives a risen life against which ' the gates of hell ' cannot prevail.

Notice this again in modern history. Lenin believed sincerely (and with reason) that the Church could be destroyed in Russia. She was ripe for death. Lenin and his successors have revived the Church in Russia. Dying, she lives. Hitler sought in a more subtle way to destroy the Church by corrupting it. He created a most moving and convincing manifestation of the life of Christ in modern Europe, the Confessional Church. Dying, she lives. The Church, therefore, remains the one great evidential fact of the gospel showing in her very existence the dying and the resurrection of Jesus.

The other evidential fact is sanctity. The pattern is repeated in the individual soul and the witness of the Church is reinforced by that of the martyr. Here again what a rich century we live in.

One of the most moving books ever published is that in which the letters of some of Hitler's prisoners have been collected—*Dying We Live*. I quote now from the last letter written by Peter, Count Yorck von Wartenburg, to his wife :

' We have probably come to the end of the beautiful, rich life we have lived in common. For to-morrow the People's Court will sit in judgment on me and the others. . . . That God has guided events as they have turned out, belongs to the inscrutableness of His ways, which I humbly accept.'

' The last time we came away after partaking of the Lord's Supper, I felt something of almost unearthly sublimity, I should in fact like to call it the presence of Christ. In retrospect it seems to me to have been a call.'

' My death will, I hope, be accepted as an Atonement for all my sins and as a vicarious sacrifice in expiation of the guilt we all harbour in common. May it also help to lessen, if only by a hair's breadth, the alienation of our era from God.'

' As dying, and, behold, we live.' ' Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord

Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.'

CHRISTMAS

The Star and the Stable

BY THE REVEREND NEIL GREGOR SMITH, M.A.,
KNOX COLLEGE, TORONTO

'Lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.'—Mt 2^9.

The journey of the Wise Men had an unexpected terminus. They had expected that their journey would take them to the courts of kings. They had brought with them gifts fit for a king. But the star they followed led them beyond the capital of Jewry and beyond the court of Herod. At the end of their journey the star they had followed so long stood over a stable in Bethlehem.

It is not likely that the stable was quite as picturesque as painters of scenes of the Nativity have depicted it. It was the ordinary stable of an ordinary village inn—a 'foul stable where the beasts feed and foam.' The Wise Men may have been more than a little dismayed when they saw this as the goal of their journey, and realized that their star had led them to a stable. Yet it was here, in the foul stable, that they found the King whom they sought. Here they presented Him their gifts, and rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

We may see in this climax of the Wise Men's journey a parable of a common human experience. We may see in it, too, a parable of the mystery of the Incarnation itself—the star standing over a stable, and the King in the stable.

1. It is quite a common human experience to follow a star and find a stable—to pursue high goals, and to find that their pursuit involves us in unpleasant drudgeries and distasteful encounters. The cynics assert that the goals which men follow always lead to stables. The wise have pondered over men pursuing endlessly the phantoms of hope, expecting age to fulfil the promises of youth, and the deficiencies of to-day to be supplied by the abundance of to-morrow. Men have been incurable followers of stars, and very often their stars have led them to stables.

In the summer of 1921 a young Canadian doctor was engaged in research in a borrowed laboratory. He had begun to study for the ministry of the Church, and had transferred to medicine, but his medical career had a most unpromising beginning. His income for the first month of his practice was exactly four dollars. His lack of patients gave him leisure for reading, and in an old medical journal he came upon a statement which he believed might be a clue to the mystery of a disease for which no cure had been obtained. He tried to interest various people in his idea. The only encouragement he had was the offer of the facilities of a laboratory during the summer months when no one else would be using it. So it was that in the summer of 1921 Frederick Banting was initiating the experiments that led to the discovery of insulin for the treatment of diabetes.

We ordinary folk think of medical research as a glamorous occupation, in which men in neat white coats peer into test tubes and manipulate impressive equipment. The work did not appear glamorous to Frederick Banting that summer—in debt, working in a borrowed laboratory, with borrowed equipment, on a project which the experts considered hopeless. It must have seemed at the time that his star had led him to a stable. Yet it was through these drudgeries and discouragements and the misery of hopes deferred, that he made his contribution to our race, and, one may say, his offering to God.

At the beginning of his work upon his monumental *Dictionary* Samuel Johnson tells us that he pleased himself with the prospect of leaving neither words nor things unexamined, of revelling in feasts of literature and excursions into obscure recesses of learning. The reality was very different. He found that one inquiry gave rise to another, that book referred to book, that to seek was not always to find, and to find was not always to be informed. His expectations of joy in his work were, he tells us, 'the dreams of a poet doomed to wake a lexicographer.' His labour was carried on amidst inconvenience and distractions, in sickness and in sorrow. His star, like so many of the stars men follow, led to a stable.

Those who offer their lives in the service of the Church follow a bright and shining star, but very often it appears that even this star leads to commonplace drudgeries that irk and irritate. It has always been so. The apostles who wrote of the Church as the body of Christ, as the bride of Christ, as the pillar and the ground of truth, had to warn its members against sins as common as theft and adultery. Yet they thought of the Church, whose flaws they knew so painfully, as the wonderful and sacred mystery through which God's redemptive purposes were being fulfilled. They offered their gifts, one may say, in the stable. In privations and discouragements, in weariness and painfulness, they poured out the treasure of their devotion, the prayers of their hearts and the labour of their hands. If their gifts were to be offered to God this was where the offering was to be made.

2. For the cynicism which asserts that stars lead to stables does not tell the whole story. It is in stooping to enter the stable, and making our offering there, that we find the joy of discovery and the thrill of achievement. The Wise Men of old found the King in the stable. Here a mother had brought forth her Child and laid Him in a manger. Here the Wise Men opened their treasures, and here they presented their gifts. The mystery of the Incarnation is the mystery of God in the stable.

When St. John tells us of the Word being made flesh more attention is usually given to the term 'word' than to the term 'flesh.' The commentators encumber us with help in trying to explain what St. John meant by the *logos*, the word. But what about 'flesh'? One usage of the term 'flesh' with which the author of the Fourth Gospel was familiar was its use in the fortieth chapter of Isaiah: 'All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. . . . The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: . . . surely the people is grass.' This is the lament which we hear in the great poetry of all peoples, the lament for the transience of beauty, for man's inability to withstand the 'wreckful siege of battering days,' the pang of pain for man going to his long, long home. That the Word was made flesh means that God took upon Him this frail vesture of flesh, flesh that suffers and grows old, that is subject to pain and weariness, to dissolution and decay. The statement that the Word was made flesh means that once, in such guise, we saw the lineaments of God. We saw the King in the stable.

3. Once more we commemorate the advent of the Word that was made flesh. Once more we sing:

> Veiled in flesh the godhead see;
> Hail, the Incarnate Deity.

And once more it seems that many of the stars we followed have led us to stables. We have forged impressive instruments of peace, and have seen nations hovering on the brink of war. We have mastered secrets of Nature, and have reason to fear that with them we may destroy ourselves. We have multiplied means of communication with one another, and seem to have multiplied the possibilities for misunderstanding.

Let us not lose faith that it is in stooping to enter the forbidding stable that we are still most likely to see the glory of the King. In facing the drudgeries of existence, in wrestling manfully with our problems, in bearing patiently and courageously the yokes imposed upon us in our times—it is thus that we present the homage of our hearts and the labour of our hands to God who has determined our times and the bounds of our habitation. It is here that we have our encounter with God, the God who humbled Himself to take the form of a servant and was found in fashion as a man. In a world that is groaning and travailling in its pain, we who have seen a star shining above a stable, and the King in the stable, will not lose our faith that it is waiting also for the fulness of its redemption.

First Sunday after Christmas

Retrospect and Response

By the Reverend Arthur A. Cowan, D.D., Edinburgh

'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.'—1 Jn 4 [10-11].

The retrospect of this season shows love at its full stretch in God's saving intervention in our bedevilled world. As we look back to the cradle at Bethlehem we see God opening up larger prospects of redeeming love to our view. And what is our response to the arrival of the Saviour? It is a thrill of thanksgiving and praise, because here is the revelation of God's purpose to keep mankind from destroying itself and to bring it to its senses. This puts us in an exalted mood, and makes us feel we are on the top of the world, with the power of victory over the threats and alarms of the age. We enjoy going to church at Christmas more than at other times, and wish we could feel like that all the year round. We would like the grateful assurance and the worshipful adoration produced by the season to last, for does not our love for God make a wonderful difference?

Shelley wrote:

> One word is too often profaned
> For me to profane it.

And the one word he meant was 'love.' John will not have love profaned by reducing it to the size of our devotional rapture, for it is something infinitely bigger than our hearts. So he contends that the wonderful difference is made, not by man's love for the glorious God, which is merely rendering honour where honour is due, but by God's love for inglorious man. The marvellous feature of the occasion is not our religious appreciation but God's assessment of false, shabby human creatures as worth saving even at the cost of humiliation and sacrifice to Himself. That people, who can be disappointing and provoking, should be so dear to Him, that He should care so much

for what seems often shoddy human material, is the staggering fact, the breath-taking surprise. 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.'

So it is not a sufficient response to the retrospect to feel the comfort of the truth: it is necessary to feel also the challenge of the truth. What does the Incarnation of God's Son in the Babe of Bethlehem demand of us? Not merely exultation in God's love but emulation of God's love. The fitting response is to partake of God's loving nature, to share in His compassionate rescue of the undeserving. When Jesus Christ was born, Divine love became one of us, and now requires our practical self-involvement with others, even with the unworthy, in their problems and miseries to retrieve the tragic situation. Religious feelings of adoration and gratitude are not the true response to the God of redeeming mercy: the true response is to love others as He has loved us. 'Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.' There lies the challenge to us, and our awareness of the Divine love for all the unfortunate and the unfit should be the urge, the incentive to relieve, to help, to serve all who are down.

But it is sometimes argued that materialists can be better comrades, with a more sympathetic and brotherly mentality, than those who have Christian faith and are conscious of God as the commanding example of love. Hemingway has a story of a young American engineer who went to fight with the Communist guerillas against Franco in the Spanish Civil War. This is what the young American said: 'You felt that you were taking part in a crusade. You felt something that was like the feeling you expected to have and did not have when you made your first Communion. It was a feeling of consecration to a duty toward all of the oppressed of the world which was authentic as the feeling you had when you heard Bach, or stood in Chartres Cathedral and saw the light coming through the great windows. It gave you a part in something you could believe in wholly and completely and in which you felt an absolute brotherhood with the others who were engaged in it. But the best thing was that there was something you could do about this feeling. You could fight.' Then notice what follows. 'In the fighting soon there was no purity of feeling left.' The young American became disillusioned when he discovered how foul, brutal, and soul-less these Communists could be, and a sick feeling of emptiness and futility came over his spirit at the loss of faith in God. Now that there was no religion, the glory had departed from everything and you could not trust any one.

A crusade for the oppressed can turn out odious and beastly without the sense of God to redeem it. The human scene becomes bleak and squalid without the Christian outlook, and it is a matter of history that it is those who have loved God that have led the way in loving others. It was the gospel of Divine mercy which brought mercy for the unfortunate and the unfit into the world and tempered toughness with tenderness for the poor and the sick. The phrase 'the weak must go to the wall' arose in the Middle Ages, and it was not callous but chivalrous, as Barbara Ward points out when she writes: 'Often the only seating in the great monastic churches was a stone bench around the wall, and to this bench were carried the feeble, the sick and the lame, while the other worshippers stood throughout the service.' This Christian compassion softened the harshness of a rough and arrogant age, and those who had been moved by God's love brought a new humaneness to human relations by their concern for the wretched. 'Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.'

Thus the real response to the Christmas retrospect is the social conscience, the public spirit, the brotherly touch. We show our devotion to God, not merely by religious feelings and ecstasies of thankfulness at being so greatly blessed, but by sharing His love for misguided human creatures and by practising the spirit of service to release them from the stranglehold of evil, as He has done, without grudging the price of loving. Appreciation of God's character is not strong and healthy unless it takes action as a co-worker with His mercy. The ship of our life may have come safely into port through storms of misgiving and may be resting joyfully in the experience of God's love, but, as Browning wrote, it will decay if it lies idle in harbour, it will

> Rot and rust
> Run to dust

because of 'some worm in the wood which gnawed its heart out,' while we were content to feel we were in right relations with God. Its adventures on the high seas are not over, but only beginning, and there are more precious cargoes to export and import. So the soul must set out from its experience of God's love to carry that love far and wide all over the world in deeds of compassion and service. This is the real response to the retrospect of God's redeeming pity in the Christ-child. 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' That gives us the direction we should take, and the length we should go in service, without tiring too soon. Religion is wholesome and vital only when it keeps sallying forth on new enterprises, which share God's love

for unhappy men and women and further His saving purpose made manifest in the Incarnation of His Son. 'Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.'

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Where Are We To Live?

BY THE REVEREND JOHN L. RIACH, B.D., EDINBURGH

'I am Alpha and Omega, . . . which is, and which was, and which is to come.'—Rev 1[8].

What is time? Is it something which flows? And, if so, in which direction does it travel? Or, is it something which remains stationary, and do we move to meet it? Is there such a thing as absolute time, or is time only relative? Such are some of the deep questions concerning time posited by the philosophers and scientists; but, so far as we ordinary mortals are concerned, we treat time very simply by dividing it into past, present, and future. At the outset of another year when we are reminded that time is marching on for all of us one of the paramount questions we have to face is, in which segment of time do we intend to live in the year ahead? Are we going to live in the past, the present, or the future?

1. In the year before us, we can, if we care, live in the past. When Goldsmith thought on that Irish village where he had seen the light of day he conjured up some of the characters he remembered as a lad. One was an old soldier who sat by the fire o' nights and, when he could find a receptive ear,

> Wept o'er his wounds, or tales of sorrow done,
> Shoulder'd his crutch, and show'd how fields were won.

There was a man who was thrown on the scrap-heap of humanity as useless and who comforted himself by dwelling continually in the past.

John Buchan reminds us that as we grow older this is precisely what we tend to do. Mark you, those who do that have their points. One of the most difficult things for us men to learn is the art of change; and in a time of rapid, revolutionary change like the present our danger is to scrap the past in its entirety, the good along with the bad. It is the people who live in the past who protest at such iconoclasm and will not allow us to deal with the bygone days in such a cavalier fashion. With their eye fixed steadily on the wisdom of the past they insist that something of it be retained no matter what changes we make; and who can deny that such continuity with the best that is gone is an excellent thing? Yet, granted those who live in the past do us this service, nevertheless they have their serious demerits. It is from their ranks that the most formidable stumbling-blocks to all sensible progress are usually to be found. New approaches to the winning of modern man, the re-orientation of the work of the ministry, the revival of beauty and dignity in our church buildings and services, which are pressing issues, find their greatest opponents in those who cannot pull themselves out of the past. We can, if we care, be like Charles Lamb when he said, 'Hang the present! I'll write for antiquity.' Should that be our choice we may preserve essential continuity with the past in our revolutionary age, but we shall probably be numbered among the greatest opponents of creative new ideas for the well-being of the world, and may have much to answer for.

2. In the year ahead, we may, if we care, live in the present. One thing men tend to forget is that, not only every individual, but every generation matters equally to God. They are inclined to believe God is more concerned with some future generation yet unborn than with their own. It is little wonder that one of our poets was moved to indignation about such an erroneous view and wrote:

> Oh dreadful thought if all our sires and we
> Are but the foundations of a race to be:
> Not caring that these mighty pillars rest
> Each on the ruin of a human breast;
> That to the shrine the victor's chariot rolls
> Across the anguish of ten thousand souls.

His angry cry is for us not to be so anxious about future generations but to be concerned about the miserable plight of our own and to do something urgent about it. His eye is rivetted on the present. Like those who live in the past, those who live in the present, and for the present, have their valuable contribution to make to the world. It is in their ranks that you find the men of action who get things done. Read the account of the naval side of preparations for the invasion of Normandy in *Operation Neptune*. The mind reels under the tremendous list of things which had to be procured and organised for the venture. It could only be achieved by men who lived for a present, urgent situation and focused all their attention upon it. Yet, the people who live for the present have their shortcomings. Scornful of consequences, they frequently leave a frightful legacy to posterity as the slums in many of our industrial cities testify; hovels which were built in the industrial revolution by men who lived only for the present and what it could give them.

3. Again, we may in the year before us live in

the future. One of the cardinal errors which many parents make with their children is that they do not enjoy them at each stage of their development. From the day they are toddlers they are dwelling on their future, dreaming of the day when they will be gold medallists, or at the head of some profession or business, or sporting a Scottish jersey at Murrayfield. The people whose gaze is always on the future like that have their contribution to make to the world's well-being. Recently, in Edinburgh, there was an exhibition of Leonardo Da Vinci's work. Plans for the making of screw nails, submarines and aeroplanes were on view—all made by this five-talented man five hundred years ago. His attention was on the future and what marvels could be put into the hands of coming generations. This is the debt we owe those who live for the future. It is from their ranks that the visionaries arise who give to the world its inventions. Yet what serious shortcomings are also to their charge. They can be so indifferent to the here and now with its sufferings. They tend to be like Karl Marx who worked day and night to produce his book, *Das Kapital*. So concerned was he about this revolution which was to take place in the future that he was quite unconcerned about the penury and suffering his poor wife had to endure until she was almost crazy.

4. Any person who lives his life in one segment of time, be it the past, the present, or the future, has his points but also his grave deficiencies. The question still remains, therefore: which period of time are we to live in?

When we turn to Jesus Christ we find that He lived in all three periods of time, or as Sir Thomas Browne puts it: 'In Him there is no distinction of tenses.' When the writer of Revelation speaks of Him as one who is, and was, and is to come that does not mean only that He lived with God the Father from all eternity before His appearance on earth, that He is present with us even now as the Risen Lord, and that He will return at the end of history to consummate His Kingdom. It does mean that, but it also means that when Jesus of Nazareth lived in Galilee nineteen hundred years ago, under the most appalling conditions, He lived in all tenses. He lived in the past, steeping Himself in the Jewish prophets who had lived years before Him. He drank in their wisdom and would not allow His generation to forget it or cast it away, saying 'Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.' He lived in the present, not being content to stand idly by and see people riddled with disease, ground down by poverty, or unhappy through an inadequate religion. Thus He shot out His hands again and again in healing no matter though it exhausted Him; He told the well-to-do to relieve the agony of the poor and Himself fed starving people through His miraculous power; He delivered to them the Sermon on the Mount with its beatitudes and His gospel with its offer of forgiveness. He lived in the future. He pointed men to the final triumph of good over evil and assured them that immortality was no false and windy rhetoric: and by His Resurrection He proved the truth of such extraordinary declarations. Jesus of Nazareth lived in all tenses—past, present, future. This is what He calls us all to do. By His grace we can in the year to come and so become more like Him who is, and was, and is to come.

First Sunday after Epiphany

Called to be Christians

By the Reverend David H. C. Read, D.D.,
New York

'To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.'—Ro 1^{7}.

The question 'What am I going *to do*?' is a big one and to settle it we need all the help we can get—unless we're just going to drift into any old job. But there is another question that is still bigger; and it is a question that hits every one of us—young, middle-aged, or old. And it is the question: 'What am I going *to be*?'

We try to dodge this question. Our standards honour the doers — without discrimination — whether what they do is to bring healing and hope to a disease-infested corner of Africa, to fly non-stop around the world, to give birth to a princess, to write a best-seller, or to sing more sexily than any one else. That's all right—these things make news. We all have a healthy desire to be up and doing, to make a mark. But by concentrating on *doing* something, we can easily forget that *being* something is the priority.

I have occasionally met men who were once known all over the world and are now nearly forgotten. Sometimes one could recognize at once a quality of greatness or goodness that remained and matured no matter how their fame was dimmed. With others there seemed little left but a shell, and a pathetic clinging to a distant halo. It is what we are—and not some passing achievement that really determines the verdict to be passed on our lives.

Here then is the question that we must learn to face, whatever our age, and whatever our chances of making a mark in this world. 'What

am I going to *be* ? ' It is a call—this call to *be*—that comes to us steadily throughout our lives, a call that came long before we remember, when our parents offered us for baptism, a call that has sounded, sometimes clearly, sometimes faintly, in a hundred different experiences at home, in church, in clubs and camps, alone or in a crowd. It is the call to be a Christian.

Our text uses another word. St. Paul greeting his Christian friends in Rome says that they are ' called to be saints.' This was one of the first words to be used to describe the followers of Christ. ' Christian ' was a later word, a kind of nickname, given first at Antioch. To-day the word saint has been given a special meaning, suggesting either a rather stuffy out-of-this-world religiosity, or else a most exceptional degree of Christian holiness and love. The people Paul called ' saints ' were just average Christians like most of us. A ' saint ' or a ' Christian ' in the New Testament sense is not one who has arrived, but one who knows where he wants to go—one facing in the right direction. And that direction is towards Christ.

Suppose an instructor were to ask a class at school : ' What are you going to be ? ' He would be rather taken aback if someone answered ' a saint.' Yet it is the answer to the *real* question : What are you going to be ? What I'm going to *do* is administration, teaching, writing, flying. What I'm going to *be*, with God's help, is a *Christian* executive, a *Christian* teacher, a *Christian* nurse, a *Christian* pilot.

I believe that if the apostle Paul were writing to us to-day (and after all, he is) he would say the same thing to us as he said to the Romans of his day. ' Called to be saints.' This is a call that comes to every one of us. And we are experts in dodging it. ' No, not for me. I'm not the stuff that saints are made of.' But God takes a scholar and adventurer like Saul of Tarsus, a doctor like Luke, a rough and violent fisherman like Peter, a quiet studious youth like John, a wild and stormy young man like Augustine, a lawyer like Calvin, a mill-girl like Mary Slessor—every conceivable variety of our human family—and he calls them to be saints.

It was a tragic mistake when the Mediaeval Church set up a two-level programme of Christianity, dividing people into ' religious ' and ' secular.' There is no such distinction in the New Testament. Some are called to be ministers, elders, evangelists, teachers in the Church, and some are not. But all are called to be saints—to be true Christians. If we accept the two levels then we can easily become content with ourselves and say that the highest reaches of the Christian life are not for us.

' Called to be saints ' means called to be Christians as we are, and where we are. ' To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints.' Not ' in a monastery garden,' not ' in a theological seminary ' or ' in a Christian Conference '—but ' in Rome.' They were called to be saints *in Rome*. ' To all that be in ——, beloved of God, called to be saints.' That is the word of God to us.

At this point a man begins to say : ' Ah, but here. That's rough. How can one be a Christian when caught up in this throbbing, rushing, competitive, materialistic city ? '

' In Rome—called to be saints.' It was the Rome of Nero. Business and public life were riddled with bribery and deceit. Family life was disintegrating. The old religion was scorned and no new religion had taken hold. Entertainments, public and private, were of such a nature as to make our towns at their most lurid look like Victorian Sunday afternoons. This was Rome. And this was where men and women, like us, were ' called to be saints.'

And it is here where we are to-day that we are called to be saints. How do we go about it ?

1. First, we recognize that the call is for us. We are not to be like one of those families where everyone sits and lets the phone bell ring, confident that it is for someone else. The first step, then, which sometimes we can omit to take, is to accept the call—to stretch up that hand of faith that receives God's great hand of grace thrust down to us in Jesus Christ. To accept the call is to know which way we want to go, to be turned to Christ.

2. Then we have to grow. No one becomes a true Christian, a complete Christian all at once. It is a process. And there are two aspects of that process—support and encounter. A chicken grows in the egg by drawing support from within and by encountering the shell through which it has to break. A child grows by support from parents and home, and by encounter with a tough and resistant world. So the ' called of Christ ' grow by the support of the Church and by encounter with the world.

We need the support of the Church. This is a school of Christ where we learn from the Bible, and in prayer, and from one another what it means to be a Christian. The man who attempts the Christian life on his own is depriving himself of nourishment. The New Testament writers never use the word ' saint ' in the singular. It is always ' saints,' for they knew that the Church was there before them, and was around them, and behind them.

And to be a Christian we need the encounter with the world. If the Roman Christians had restricted their calling to the walls of their church,

they might have gained support and kept each other's faith warm for a year or two—but the Church in the end would have died. And we might not here to-day be hearing the call of Christ. But the Roman Christians sought the encounter with the world. They claimed Rome for Christ. Few of the Christians to whom St. Paul was writing may have survived to see much result from their witness. Many may have been burned as human torches to light the gardens at one of Nero's revels. But they sought the encounter. It was 'in Rome' they were 'called to be saints.'

So it is in the encounter with our daily work, with the gay and the sad, the brilliant and the sordid, the hopeful and the despairing aspects of our society, that we respond to the call and grow in Christ. Around us is the opportunity to grow in grace as we serve in the name of Christ. Every day as we begin our normal work we could remind ourselves—'In Rome—called to be saints.'

Some of us have been called to be ministers. Some have been called to be elders. Some have been called to leadership in our youth organizations. But all of us—all without exception—are called to be 'saints'—real Christians in this twentieth century. What is our response? Let me close with this. God never calls anyone without supplying the grace we need for the task. This is our biggest task—to become real Christians. And He has promised us His Holy Spirit.

Contributions and Comments

Ἁρπαγμός . . . ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσε

THE exegesis of Ph $2^{6ff.}$ is notoriously difficult, and the various problems involved have been discussed at great length. It is, therefore, all the more surprising that two interesting suggestions made in this connection more than forty years ago do not appear to have attracted serious attention.

(i) Ἁρπαγμός

In *The Journal of Theological Studies*, x. [July, 1909] 573, Mr. J. Ross examines the meaning of the vexed word ἁρπαγμός, rendered by A.V. *robbery* and by R.V. *prize*, and concludes that the word must be given its full active signification, the act of robbery, which it normally bears in profane Greek. Scholars (*e.g.*, Lightfoot, Gifford) had long felt the difficulty of assigning such an active (or abstract) meaning to ἁρπαγμός both because it seemed incompatible with the validity of our Lord's claim to be on an equality with God, and because, in its context, one would expect the clause immediately following to begin with a concessive phrase such as 'but nevertheless' or 'yet however.' In face of these difficulties, Lightfoot and Gifford treated ἁρπαγμός as = ἅρπαγμα and assigned to it the latter's passive (or concrete) meaning *prize*, thus implying that St. Paul, intending the meaning of the commoner ἅρπαγμα (17x in LXX), with which he must have been familiar, used instead the rare ἁρπαγμός, which does not occur at all in LXX and not elsewhere in the New Testament. Ross points out the further difficulty that ἅρπαγμα does not properly mean a thing to be grasped in future, but one carried off already—*res rapta*, not *res rapienda*. The difficulties in the way of equating ἁρπαγμός with ἅρπαγμα seem to Ross insuperable, and he therefore suggests a possible alternative solution. Ἁρπαγμός is to be given its full active force = *robbery*, but the first readers would never imagine that Paul spoke of robbing God, but 'rather that he was telling them that the Messiah, Christ Jesus, did not think that to be on an equality with God spelt rapacity, plundering, self-aggrandizement; that on the contrary He gave all away, did not set up as an earthly king, but was among His disciples "as one that serveth," with all the infirmities of our mortality, submitting at last to the most shameful death. And here was St. Paul exhorting them to imitate His mind' (p. 573 f.). This interpretation, Ross claims, is consonant alike with our Lord's rejection in the wilderness of the Devil's temptation to ἁρπαγμός and with St. Paul's own confession 'what things were gain to me, those have I counted loss for Christ' (Ph 3^{7}).

(ii) Ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσε

In *The Journal of Theological Studies*, xii. [April, 1911], 461-463, the Rev. W. Warren refers with approval to Ross's interpretation of ἁρπαγμός, noting that it removes all ambiguity from the phrase ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσε, which may now be interpreted as the exact antithesis of ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο: 'He considered His equality with God not as an opportunity for self-aggrandizement, but effaced all thought of self and poured out His fullness to enrich others.' The phrase ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσε is seen to involve two ideas:—

(i) Abnegation of selfish impulses—the opposite of self-aggrandizement or ambition.

(ii) Self-devotion and self-sacrifice for others—the opposite of plundering others or ignoring their interests in one's own ambition.

Warren rejects Gifford's assumption that ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσε requires some genitive of content to be supplied, and suggests that what Christ poured out was Himself. Examples of this use of κενόω are adduced from Classical and Hellenistic writers. This interpretation is in harmony with the view of our Lord's humility which is of constant occurrence in the New Testament, and has the added advantage of fitting in well with the exhortation to humility, which is the motif of the Philippian passage. It also removes the passage from the arena of the Kenotic controversy, which has so long influenced its exegesis. Warren points out that if this interpretation is sound, then we have a parallel to Is 53^{12}. One wonders if St. Paul had the words of Isaiah in mind, and sought to re-enforce the prophet's assertion that the Servant was divided a portion with the great not because He snatched the spoil, but because He poured out His soul unto death. The work of Warren (and of Ross) has interesting possibilities also for the Second Adam doctrine, and it seems a pity their articles have not attracted more attention. Warren is cited in Bauer (*W.B.N.T.* on κενόω) and by Michael (*Moffatt New Testament Commentary : Philippians*, 90), but Ross's suggestions seem to have gone unnoticed.

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Oded : Proto-Type of the Good Samaritan

T. W. Manson (*Sayings of Jesus*, 262), on the Parable of the Good Samaritan, briefly comments : 'With the parable itself, cf. 2 Ch 28^{1-15}.'

The comparison deserves fuller consideration. The Old Testament passage, after describing Israel's raid on Jerusalem and return with captives to Samaria, tells of the protest by the prophet Oded and of his appeal for compassion. 'And the men who have been mentioned by name rose and took the captives, and with the spoil they clothed all that were naked among them ; they clothed them, gave them sandals, provided them with food and drink, and anointed them ; and carrying all the feeble among them on asses, they brought them to their kinsfolk at Jericho, the city of palm trees. Then they returned to Samaria' (2 Ch 28^{15} [R.S.V.]).

In comparing this passage with the parable, we find strong resemblances that out-weigh minor differences. Both graphically convey the same Divine message of generous, practical, brotherly help for those in need. Both refer to the same cities—Jerusalem, Jericho and Samaria. Both cover the same ideas in similar but not identical words : Naked (stripped), clothed (bound up), anointed (pouring on oil and wine), carried on asses (set on his own beast), brought them to their kinsfolk at Jericho (brought him to an inn and took care of him).

In the light of these facts, it seems more than likely that the parable owes much to this Old Testament passage. Yet dependence is not immediately obvious. The allusion is veiled. May this not have been intentional ? As the parable was told, the allusion to the passage in 2 Chronicles would only gradually dawn on the scribe and thus the message of the parable would be reinforced by the authority of sacred writ.

So the Word of God, spoken of old by His Prophet, Oded, was spoken to us by His Son.

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Recent Foreign Theology

Barth on Hegel. One of the chapters of Karl Barth's German work on Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century has been translated into French, and issued separately in the series of *Cahiers Théologiques*. This is the chapter devoted to Hegel,[1] and it offers a valuable appreciation of the thought of Hegel as the philosophy of self-confidence which is at the same time confidence in God, as the recognition of the necessity of the activity of God in creation, revelation and history, if He were to be God, and as the true evaluation of the relation between reason and revelation. Barth emphasizes that Hegel remained a true believer, and holds that the depreciation of Hegel since his day represents a declension rather than progress in thought. It is refreshing to find in Barth so stalwart a defender of the genius of Hegel, whose stock has fallen so low in much modern thought.

[1] *Hegel* [1955]. Delachaux et Niestlé, Neuchatel and Paris ; Swiss Fr. 3·50.

The Lord's Supper. In the same series comes a study of the significance of the Christian sacrament by F. J. Leenhardt, under the title *This is my body.*[2] The author is conscious that his work will be read with surprise by many of his fellow-Protestants, who will accuse him of Romanist tendencies. This

[2] *Ceci est mon corps : Explication de ces paroles de Jésus-Christ* [1955]. Delachaux et Niestlé, Neuchatel and Paris ; Swiss Fr. 3·85.

s because he interprets the sacrament in terms of
ıcrifice. and is prepared to defend the use of the
ord 'transsubstantiation.' But it is improbable
ıat the meaning he gives to the terms would
atisfy a Roman Catholic. He insists that Jesus
aid 'This is my body,' and not 'This represents
ny body,' and holds that if his meaning had been
he latter the words used were an unhebraic way
of expressing it. But when Zedekiah made iron
horns and said to the king 'With these shalt thou
gore the Syrians' (1 K 22^{11}), he meant no more
than that the horns represented the victorious
power of Ahab. When Elisha bade the king shoot
an arrow, and then described it as an arrow of
victory over Syria (2 K 13^{17}), he meant no more
than that the arrow represented the victory. These
were symbols charged with a meaning and a power
in the thought of the prophets. There would be
nothing unhebraic in our Lord's using the bread as
a symbol, charged with a meaning and a power.
It is not necessary to use terms which suggest a
change in the substance of the bread, in order to
recognize the spiritual power with which the bread
is charged in the sacrament. Having said this, the
reviewer would add that he shares with Dr.
Leenhardt the view that the sacrament is more
than a memorial, but that when rightly received it
becomes the organ of Christ's power to enrich the
partaker.

The Messianic Hope in the Psalter. Canon J. Coppens, whose numerous publications find frequent mention in these columns, has written a short study in Flemish, with a French résumé, on the Messianic hope in the Psalter.[1] He draws attention, as many recent writers have done, to the want of precision in the use of the terms Messianism and Messiah, and holds that in the strict sense of the term the Messiah, *i.e.*, the ideal king of the last days, is not found in the Psalter. Yet in the broader sense of the term there is a Messianism centring in the Davidic dynasty. There are also psalms which look for the rule of God in human affairs, and which take the place, in some measure, of the prophetic expectation of the ideal king of the future. Doctrinally, therefore, these psalms are to be linked with the prophetic passages, which Canon Coppens would interpret in a more strictly Messianic sense. As always with this writer's work there is first-class bibliographical information, and the list of works dealing with the Messianic hope in the Old Testament, given at the end of the study, would alone give high value to this little publication.

[1] *De messiaanse verwachting in het Psalmboek.* (Mededelingen van de Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie, Klasse der Letteren [1955], No. 5) [1955]. Paleis der Academiën, Brussels.

The After-life in the Old Testament. R. Martin-Achard is the author of a careful and judicious examination of the teaching of the Old Testament on what follows death.[2] After an examination of the thought on the significance and characteristics of life and death in the Old Testament, and the shadowy existence in Sheol, the author examines the passages in which life and death are described as in the hand of God, the stories of resurrection wrought by prophets, the psalms in which sickness and misfortune are described in terms of death from which God restores the sufferer, and the stories of Enoch and Elijah. Next he examines the passages in which the national resurrection of Israel is promised, and the obscure passage in Is 53 in which the resurrection of the Servant is perhaps foretold, together with the verses in Is 25 and 26 and Dn 12 in which clearer promise of individual resurrection is commonly found. Passages in the psalms in which confidence in the continued fellowship with God is expressed are next examined, and finally Job 19^{25-27}. The final section of the book turns to the question of possible foreign influence on the development of Old Testament thought, but the author traces the development rather to the unfolding of Divine revelation. It is well-known that scholars differ in their interpretation of a number of the passages here examined. They are here very fully treated, with reference to the work of other scholars, and the author is careful not to overpress his evidence. The value of his work is not in any strikingly new conclusions, but in the balanced discussion of the issues.

Concordance of Ugaritic. For the past twenty-five years or so we have been familiar with the important series of texts that have been found at Ras Shamra, and especially those found in Ugaritic alphabetic cuneiform, and editions of the texts, grammars and vocabularies have been published. Now G. D. Young, an American Professor, has published a Concordance of these texts.[3] This will serve a useful purpose, though in some places a less mechanical Concordance might have been of greater service. Thus there are two columns of references for *w*, which could with advantage have been classified. As further texts are still coming to light, this Concordance will doubtless have to be extended in a second edition, when such improvements can be made. Meanwhile all who are interested in the Ugaritic texts will want to have access to this work.

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[2] *De la mort à la résurrection d'après l'Ancien Testament* (Bibliothèque Théologique) [1956]. Delachaux et Niestlé, Neuchatel and Paris.

[3] *Concordance of Ugaritic* (*Analecta Orientalia*, 36) [1956]. Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome. Lire 1800; bound Lire 2700

Entre Nous

New Testament Clues

There is no kind of book more practically useful than the book which enables the reader to read a still greater book with more intelligence and understanding. Such a book is *Inherit the Promise*, by Professor Pierson Parker, Th.D. (Seabury Press, Greenwich, Conn.; $4.25). The book is subtitled *Six Keys to New Testament Thought* and the six keys are The Idea of the Covenant, The New Age, The Law, Truth by Contraries, Physical and Spiritual, and The Man.

We can best indicate the character of this book by taking one of its sections—Physical and Spiritual.

In life there is always the conflict between spirit and body, mind and matter, the visible and the invisible. On the one hand there is human physique; on the other there are the invisible values —truth, loyalty, friendship, unselfishness, serenity. How can the material and the spiritual be reconciled? There are various answers to that question.

(1) Some claim that only the material is real. Communism urges us to find satisfaction in material processes alone. To Christian Naturalism 'God' means whatever you find most worthwhile in the universe. 'Judgment' means that we must either join with others in mutual service or take the consequences. 'Prayer' means turning our minds to that which is best. 'Immortality' means our influence on those who live after us. There is the worship of Social Culture, which finds the greatest values in material standards.

(2) Some wish only to escape from the material. Hinduism and Buddhism wish to escape into Nirvana or the Absolute. Physical things and events are evil, illusory and despised. Gnosticism argued that the All-perfect God cannot have contact with matter. Docetism argued that if Jesus Christ is the Son of God then He cannot even have had a real body, and must have been only a literally disembodied spirit. In a sense Calvinism is guilty of the same hatred of the material, for the doctrine of total depravity is a symptom of the same line of thought. Neo-orthodoxy with its stress on the *wholly otherness* of God represents the same tendency of thought.

On the other hand, for Christianity matter and spirit are inseparable. It is in fact the world which is to be transfigured, the physical order which is to become sacred to God. As William Temple said: 'Christianity is the most avowedly materialist of all the great religions.' For that reason Christianity must be certain things.

(1) It is an *ecclesiastical religion*—that is to say, it is a religion of community, 'for it is to live and pray not *I* but *we*.'

(2) It is an *eschatological religion*. It holds that God has a purpose which cannot ultimately be gainsaid, that purpose is for the world. It is not only for man; it is for the universe.

(3) It is a *social gospel*, for the simple yet profound reason that, as Christianity sees it, 'the world around us must neither be ignored, nor escaped from, nor succumbed to. It must be redeemed.'

(4) It is a *sacramental religion*. 'Sacrament means that God takes the physical thing, invests that with Himself, and makes *that* a vehicle whereby He comes to us.' 'The eternal God can take *anything* He has created, and make that His Holy of Holies.'

All this has certain direct consequences for Christian belief. Man is confronted with two facts —the physical fact of his body and the spiritual fact of his mind or soul. In one sense the *flesh* seems to be in Paul an evil thing, but it must be remembered that for Paul the body is nothing less than a potential Holy of Holies, a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Co 6^{19}). It is in fact when body and spirit are kept apart that the flesh does become an evil thing. But the flesh can be endowed with the Spirit even to the extent of God Himself coming in the flesh.

The New Testament refuses to think of man as a permanent soul encased in a transitory body. The New Testament insists that 'you cannot cut men in two.' And that is why the New Testament has little to say about the immortality of the soul, and much to say about the resurrection of the body. *Aphtharsia* and *athanasia* which mean *immortality* occur respectively two and three times in the New Testament; *anastasis* which means *resurrection* occurs thirty-eight times. It is useless to discuss what kind of body the resurrection body will be. The New Testament is not concerned with the question: '*How* does God work it?' but with the question: '*What* has God wrought?' The life beyond involves the whole person. 'God created physique. He cannot despise what He has made.' Here, indeed, is a necessary emphasis for here is the emphasis on the redemption of man as a whole.

The book embarks upon great subjects and treats them with lucidity and with an honesty which shirks no question. There is no doubt that a connected exposition of the ideas of the New Testament will enable us better to understand the New Testament itself when we go to it.

WILLIAM BARCLAY

Printed in Scotland by MORRISON & GIBB LIMITED, Tanfield Works, and Published by T. & T. CLARK, 38 George Street, Edinburgh. It is requested that all literary communications be addressed to THE EDITOR, King's Gate, Aberdeen, Scotland.